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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the three issues of the serial "VOX" published in 1989-1991. Major articles in these issues include: "The Original Languages of Australia"; "UNESCO and Universal Literacy"; "Language Shift and Maintenance in Torres Strait"; "Maintaining and Developing Italian in Australia"; "Literature and Language Learning"; "The Interview Test of English as a Second Language"; "Trends and Factors in Language Shift in Australia"; "Banishing Fear from Assessing LOTE Learning"; "Some Thoughts on Gender, Inequality and Language Reform"; "The Languages of Spain: A Causerie"; "Language Retention by Ancestry and Generation"; "Language and Economy in their Cultural Envelope"; "A Hard-Nosed Multiculturalism: Revitalising Multicultural Education?"; "Asian Studies in Australia and Some Overseas Comparisons"; "Languages for the Professions: Linguistic and Cultural Presuppositions"; "Plain English: Simple or Simplistic"; "The Role of Mother Tongue Literacy in Third Language Learning"; "Maori Bilingual Education and Language Revitalization"; "World Trends and Issues in Adult Literacy"; "The Samoan Language in the New Zealand Educational Context"; "Student Opinions of a French Language Immersion Program"; "Pijin Long Melanisa Tede--Melanesian Pidgin Today"; "Bilingual Education and the Eastern South Pacific: Fact or Myth?"; Toward Communication-Oriented English Teaching in Japan: The Introduction of Native Assistant English Teachers"; "Aboriginal English: An Introduction"; "Ethnic Minority Pupils in the Netherlands"; "Australian English"; "Language Planning in Africa"; "Voices of the Generations to Come: What Future for Minority Immigrant Languages?"; "The Role of English in the Development of a National Identity in a Multilingual Setting: The Singapore Dilemma"; "Early German at Ridley"; "Teaching Cognitive Skills in the Foreign Language Classroom: Reading and Thought"; and "Estimating Sydney's Language Resource: Preliminary Findings of Four Years of College Selection Tests." (MSE)

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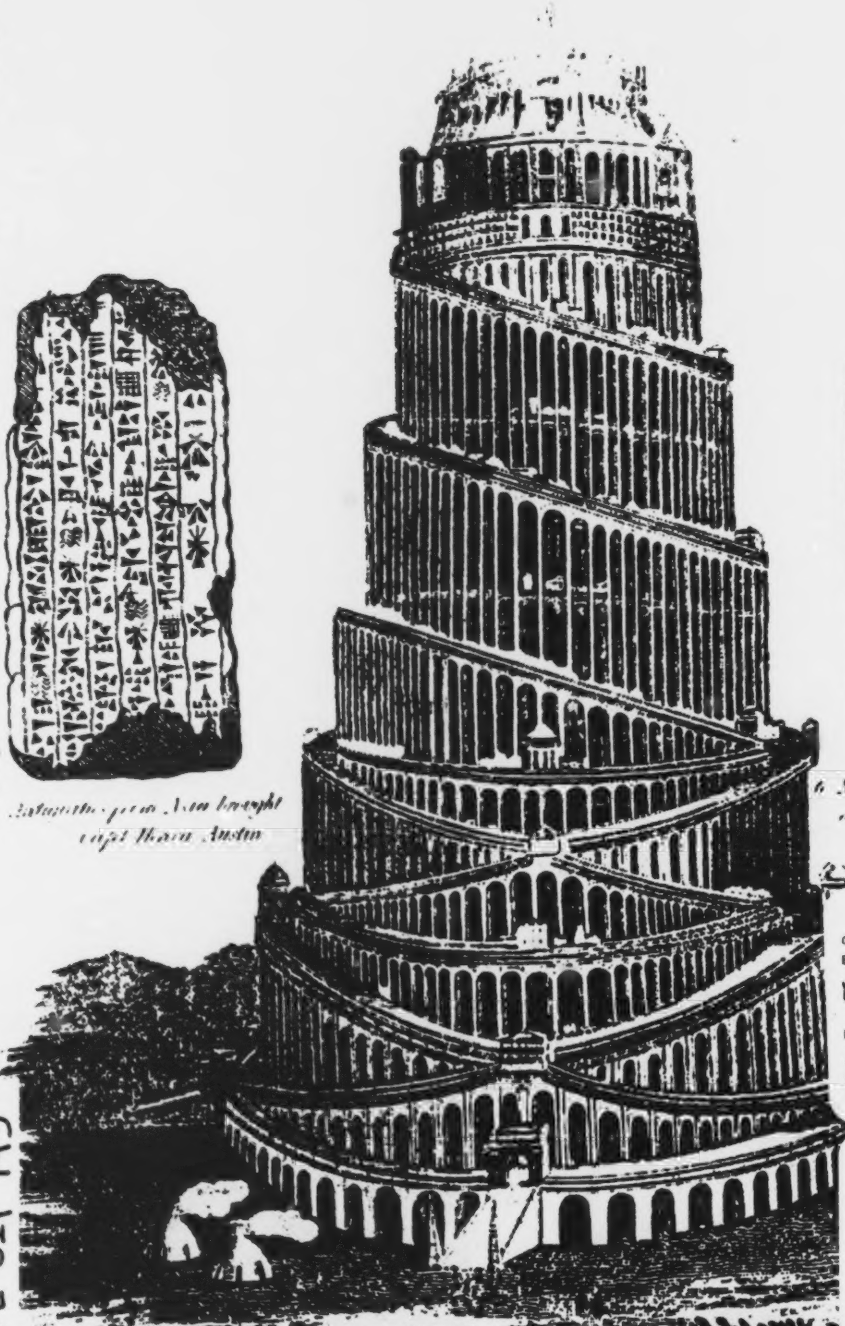
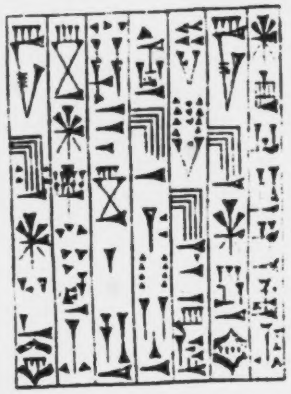
# VOX





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VOX is the journal of the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education. It is a medium for the exchange of information on languages policy and multicultural education issues, and in particular, the National Policy on Languages. Two issues will be published each year.

This issue is presented in two sections. The first section contains information about ACCLAME, its activities, the implementation of the National Policy on Languages and recent developments in languages policy in Australia and overseas. The second section consists of contributed articles relating to different aspects of languages policy.

Articles, with photographs or other illustrations where possible, are invited for consideration for future issues. Articles should be approximately 3000 words, and follow the conventions of this issue. All correspondence should be addressed to the:

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COVER:
The cover illustration of the Tower of Babel is a rendering from a 19th century engraving belonging to the Granger Collection, New York.

The Tower of Babel is said to have been built in the land of Shinar (Babylonia) some time after the Deluge. According to the story in Genesis 11:1–9, the Babylonians wanted to build a city and a tower whose top would reach to heaven. Their project angered Jehovah and as a punishment for their presumption he confused their language so that they no longer understood one another and scattered them over the face of the earth. The story appears to be an attempt to explain the existence of diverse human languages and races.

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AUSTRALIA
**Department of Employment, Education and Training**

# From the Chair

This third issue of *Vox* is appearing about halfway through the planned implementation of the National Policy on Languages (NPL). The principles of the NPL, and the programs flowing from them, appear to have been well accepted and in several cases to have been incorporated into new languages policy initiatives so that their longevity seems reasonable.

Though the Adult Literacy Action Campaign has come to the end of its planned life, the celebration of International Literacy Year and the Government's financial commitment to this — in conjunction with increased activity in the field — has generated renewed and expanded interest in the adult literacy area.

The National Aboriginal Education Policy, to be issued soon, will give further impetus to support for Aboriginal languages. Also, the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia will guarantee a longer life to the Federal Government's involvement in cross-cultural education and the teaching of languages other than English. In addition, the continued focus on Asian studies and languages at the federal level seems assured with the allocation under the NPL having been extended for a further two years.

The Federal Government, however important its co-ordinating, leadership and funding role, is still only a relatively minor player in this game. The States have realised the need to redress the past neglect of language teaching and learning — Victoria, Western Australia and New South Wales have new and very encouraging policies, while the other States have ongoing commitments or established policies.

In this issue of Vox, in the first section, we feature language policy developments in New South Wales, having previously looked at developments in Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. The articles on the Languages Institute of Australia report on an exciting development in language teaching/learning at the tertiary level which has come about largely under the auspices of the NPL and with extensive input from AACLAME. The roles of the Canadian Commissioner of Official Languages and the Maori Language Commission are discussed in articles taken respectively from the publications *Language and Society* and *New Settlers and Multicultural Education Issues*.

In the second section, as is now established practice, we feature contributed articles. Michael Clyne and Stephanie Jaehrling complete the examination and comparison, commenced by Clyne in *Vox 1*, of the trends and factors in language shift between the 1976 and 1986 censuses; Phillip Jones discusses UNESCO's involvement in literacy activities and the international and historical context of International Literacy Year; Anna Shnukal's article describes and analyses language shift and maintenance in the Torres Strait, a lesser-known part of our island-continent while Robert Dixon's article deals with the astonishing complexity of issues concerning Australia's multifarious, unique and original languages, and the general threat of extinction which they face. Tim Mehigan provides a spirited defence of the place and relevance of the study of literature in language learning, Camilla Bettoni writes about Italian, a more recent addition to Australia's linguistic demography, and for years now, Australia's second most widely spoken language, while the article by Anne Pauwels considers the question of gender and language reform. The articles by Griffin, Martin and Tomlinson, and by Rado and Reynolds deal with different aspects of language learning assessment.

Joseph LoBianco

Joseph Lo Bianco

# The Tower of Babel

*by Heinrich Stefanik*

Myths explore the human condition. They are simple but not simplistic stories. One of the most enduring is centred on the building of a tower in the ancient land of Shinar, also known as Babylonia. It is also one of the most misquoted myths, usually used to buttress the view that the world's many languages (about 6000) are decidedly a nuisance, a punishment.

The front of Vox reproduces a 19th century drawing. Tradition has it that the tower was one of those high, stepped ziggurats, ruins of which are still found in Mesopotamia.

According to Sumerian tablets referring back to the third millenium B.C., 'there was once a time when the whole universe, the people in unison, to the god Enlil in one tongue gave praise.' The Hebrew version of the myth, written a good thousand years later, repeats the theme of the whole world speaking one language. But then the scribe introduces an important new element by maintaining that one day the leaders of Babylon said, 'Come let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top reaching heaven. Let us make a name for ourselves. . .'

Reaching for the stars in a grandiose and expensive gesture is something that our century can readily comprehend. Although they had no rockets, no computers and no lasers, the old Babylonians' extravagance is barely matched by that of our own time.

So successful were the ancient builders that they disturbed the biblical Yahweh, who was overheard to remark: 'This is only the start of their undertakings! Now nothing they plan to do will be beyond them.' He then decided to go down and confuse their language. 'And,' the narrator concludes, 'that is why it was called Babel, since there Yahweh confused the language of the whole world, and from there Yahweh scattered them all over the world.'

The biblical scribe explained 'Babel' by the root 'belel', to confuse. Most philologists however reject this as a blatantly tendentious piece of folk etymology and say that, in fact, 'Babel' means 'Gate of God'.

The obscure scribe's explanation persists nonetheless. Still, it is curious that the Babel myth continues to be widely expounded as telling us that linguistic diversity is a punishment. Any fair-minded reading should rather lead us to a very different view: diversity is a theocratic stratagem to cut the ground from under the all too human urge towards megalomania. Given the moral vision of the story, Yahweh's intervention surely has to be construed as a blow against unwholesome hegemony abetted by monolingualism. The tower of Babel remains forever a warning against insensate pride and overreaching.

Isn't the story telling us, really, that small is beautiful, that linguistic pluralism is a safer and more sensible foundation for humanity's affairs?

The tower myth indeed comments on important aspects of the human condition. It can still teach us much; but it can hardly encourage us to hanker for a world in which only the same language is spoken.

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*Dr Heinrich Stefanik is a member of AACLAME*

# BREAKTHROUGH:
# Languages Institute of Australia

*by Joseph Lo Bianco*

A major and very important development in language policy is about to get underway in Australia. On 19 June 1989 the Minister for Employment, Education and Training announced the establishment of the Languages Institute of Australia (LIA).

Mr Dawkins stated:

*'This is an exciting development in language education in Australia and is further proof of the Federal Labor Government's determination to see through the full implementation of its National Policy on Languages.*

*The LIA is not just an exciting innovation which will dramatically improve the quality and extent of language education in Australia, it also represents a new form of co-operative institutional structure. Eventually all of Australia will be directly connected to the LIA.'*

The LIA has been funded from programs of the National Policy on Languages and the Commonwealth's Key Centres of Teaching and Research Program. Over $1 million has been allocated in the first year.

The LIA will consist of a central secretariat to be based in Melbourne, a Language Testing Unit (University of Melbourne in collaboration with the Brisbane College of Advanced Education) three Research and Development Programs ie Language and Society (Monash University), Second Language Acquisition (the University of Sydney in collaboration with the Macarthur Institute of Higher Education) and Language and Technology (the University of Queensland). A national data-base and clearing house on languages will be set up from the Queensland base of the LIA.

In addition the LIA will set up Teaching and Curriculum Centres and eventually one will be based in all States and major cities of Australia.

The concept of some form of LIA has a long history which is extremely interesting and reveals widespread support for the notion of the LIA.

In 1975 the idea of a National Language Planning Commission was floated with a focus on language planning issues rather than on language education activities. During 1980-81, a group of applied linguists met frequently over about six months to discuss language policy issues. A National Institute of Languages was one of the ideas discussed. The ideas were crystallised in a paper on the subject by Emeritus Professor Michael Halliday (then professor of Linguistics at Sydney University).

A group called the Professional Language Associations for a National Language Policy (the PLANLangPol Committee), established formally in August 1981, brought together six national professional associations with an interest in language — the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, the Australian Linguistic Society, the Aboriginal Languages Association, the Australian Association for the Teaching of English, the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers' Associations (AFMLTA) and the Australasian Universities Languages and Literatures Association. In their January 1983 report, *A National Language Policy for Australia*, the PLANLangPol Committee put forward a considered proposal for a National Languages Institute.

The AFMLTA proposed the establishment of a National Language Information and Research Centre in 1978 in a submission to the Commonwealth Government, prepared initially at the request of the Council of the AFMLTA. This proposal was updated in 1984. The National Language Information and Research Centre was originally envisaged as something a little different from the Institute. The major emphasis in 1978 was the need for collecting and disseminating information, and for coordinating existing efforts in educational language planning. This need was seen by PLANLangPol as being superseded by the notion of the Institute.

In its 1984 report, *A National Language Policy*, the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts considered several mechanisms for implementing a national policy on languages, including a national institute of languages and a national advisory council. It favoured the establishment of a broadly representative national advisory council on language policy (recommendation 2), conferred with advisory, coordinating and policy research functions, reporting regularly to both Commonwealth and State Governments, rather than the establishment of a national institute of languages. AACLAME is the manifestation of this proposed advisory body.

The report, *National Policy on Languages* also advocated the formation of an advisory council to oversee and advise on implementation of the national policy on languages, together with the establishment of key centres of research, teaching and learning in a number of areas, including:

- Aboriginal languages and bilingual education;
- community languages;
- applied English;
- intensive language training for Australian representatives overseas;

- national clearinghouse on language teaching, research and information accessing curriculum data bases;
- tertiary education for the deaf, using Australian Sign Language;
- Asian languages.

Each of these was intended to provide a necessary infrastructural foundation for the ultimate setting up of an 'institute' which, it was envisaged, did not necessarily need to be other than the coordinator of these activities.

More recently, the possibility of establishing a National Institute of Languages was raised by the Asian Studies Council in the context of its Inquiry into the Teaching of Asian Studies and Languages in Higher Education.

In November 1988, the Australian Research Council advertised $240,000 for the establishment of a Key Centre for Teaching and Research in Languages. Although a shortlisting of the 12 applicants for this centre took place the whole matter was overtaken when the Minister for Employment, Education and Training decided to upgrade the Key Centre to a languages institute. AACLAME was requested to provide advice on its structure and functions. All the original applicants were advised to modify their proposals to incorporate the budget and broader mandate of a languages institute. Under the auspices of the Australian Research Council, a Selection Panel met on 31 May 1989 with the shortlisted applicants. A consensus was arrived at for the new structure in keeping with the accepted charter and functions which AACLAME had devised.

In its report to the Minister the Selection Panel noted that since no model is available, either in Australia or overseas, the most appropriate structures will have to be developed as the LIA grows. A particular emphasis will be required on communications, including electronic communications, and on cohesive policies, to establish and maintain the ethos of Languages Institute of Australia as a cooperative national enterprise. This will require regular face-to-face meetings and conferences, as well as communication by electronic mail. These activities will generate significant costs, but the benefits will be high.

In general terms, the seven designated functions of the Languages Institute will be met through various centres and structures of the Institute as follows:

Function 1: Professional development — through the provision of existing courses and the development of new courses within Research and Development Programs and Projects, at Teaching and Curriculum Centres, and through Nationally Coordinated Programs.

Function 2: Data-base — data input will be via the Centres and Programs. Responsibility for the communications and information management in the network will lie specifically with the University of Queensland.

Function 3: Research — through the Research and Development Programs and Projects.

Function 4: Policy advice — through the Advisory Council and the Executive Committee.

Function 5: Testing — through the Testing Unit and through designated Research and Development Programs for language testing, with the tests delivered at Teaching and Curriculum Centres.

Function 6: Vocational courses — through the provision of existing courses, and new courses developed within Research and Development Programs and Projects, at Teaching and Curriculum Centres and designated delivery points, and through Nationally Coordinated Programs.

Function 7: Housing the secretariats of national language associations as appropriate, and depending on the location of the secretariats, within Teaching and Curriculum Centres.

The Panel also noted the potential of the LIA to provide a new model which might be applied to other areas of teaching and research in Australia. The model proposed, which combines some features of Key Centres with a distributed network, and has strong emphases on communications for the sharing of ideas, expertise and material, puts forward a unique cooperative approach for geographically distributed centres for teaching and research.

The Languages Institute will consist of a central Secretariat and a number of distributed activities in the centres, programs and projects. The underlying goal of this structure is to enable the LIA to have the maximum outreach, as well as to coordinate and focus the expertise in the languages field across Australia.

The centre of the LIA, the central Secretariat, will coordinate the work of the whole Institute and act as a link between the Institute and governments, users and the private sector. The Secretariat, to be

# Languages Institute of Australia

## CHARTER

*The Languages Institute of Australia (LIA) will contribute to improving the quality and relevance of language education in keeping with the goals and principles of the National Policy on Languages and Australia's social, economic and cultural needs.*

## FUNCTIONS

*The LIA will:*

*Offer national leadership and guidance on language education issues by:*

- *providing professional development activities for language lecturers, teacher trainers and teachers;*
- *creating and operating a data base/clearinghouse on language education issues and regularly disseminating information from these;*
- *facilitating and conducting research needed to improve practice in language education;*
- *regularly assessing language education needs by providing advisory and consultancy services to government, unions, business and the community on relevant language issues.*

*Offer practical support for language education across Australia by:*

- *providing, on a cost-recovery basis, a language testing service and associated consultancy activities appropriate to various professions including the development of proficiency measurement instruments in English and in other languages;*
- *organising special-purpose vocational language teaching outside the award bearing structures of tertiary institutions on a fee-for-service basis;*
- *offering a base in which to house the secretariats of national language associations.*

established in Melbourne, will consist of a Director and appropriate administrative and support staff. It will report to an Advisory Council, which will include representatives of the higher education institutions in each state and territory. The Secretariat will be advised on day-to-day operations by an Executive Committee. In formulating policy and making allocations of resources the Secretariat will be advised by three panels:

Teaching and Curriculum
Research and Development
Resource and Clearinghouse

Initial allocation: $240,000

Teaching and Curriculum Centres, eventually in each major city, will act as local agents of the LIA. Their principal functions will be to collect and provide information, and to mount and organise courses. There will be initially one such Teaching and Curriculum Centre, located in the Secretariat in Melbourne. The Teaching and Curriculum Centres will be responsible to the Teaching and Curriculum Panel.

Initial allocation: $45,000

Research and Development Programs, which will be responsible to the Research and Development Panel, are major programs of research, concentrated primarily but not exclusively in one location, and designated to undertake major research investigations on the general pattern of Key Centres.

Initial allocations:

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| Language and Society (Monash University) | $150,000 |
| Second language learning (University of Sydney) | $150,000 |
| Language Testing Unit (University of Melbourne) | $170,000 |
| Language Testing (Brisbane College of Advanced Education) | $80,000 |
| Language and Technology (University of Queensland) | $100,000 |

Research and Development Projects are shorter-term projects with narrower goals. The Research and Development Projects will be responsible to the Research and Development Panel. There will be no initial allocation, pending the appointment of the Research and Development Panel.

Nationally Coordinated Programs will focus expertise in key areas like course development and language methodology. This expertise is to be found in many locations around Australia, and the Nationally Coordinated Programs will provide a means of coordinating these resources to fulfil specific goals, as determined by the Research and Development Panel. The Nationally Coordinated Programs will be responsible to the Research and Development Panel. There will be no initial allocation, pending the appointment of the Research and Development Panel.

## Review of the teaching of modern languages in higher education

As the process of setting up the Languages Institute gets under way a related development should be mentioned which will also enhance language education quality at the tertiary level. At the request of the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, and the Prime Minister, AACLAME is commissioning a Review of the teaching of modern languages in higher education. The Review will be funded under the National Policy on Languages and will become a joint project with the LIA when it becomes operative. It is expected that the next issue of the AACLAME Newsletter, UPDATE, will have a more detailed article on the Review.

## Conclusion

The LIA and the Review will bring to the Higher Education sector a level of attention and interest in languages which will inevitably greatly contribute to meeting the goals of the NPL.

# The Languages Institute of Australia:

## A model to mobilize Australia's language resources

by ***Roland Sussex***

The question of how to mobilise Australia's language resources evoked a great deal of thought and discussion in the early months of 1989, ever since the Minister announced that the earlier plan to establish a Key Centre for Applied Language Studies would be changed and enlarged into a national languages institute.

### Precursors

Most institutes overseas do not provide a ready model for a languages institute in Australia being specifically designed to foster, preserve and regulate a national language. The Académie Française has this function. Similarly, the national language institutes in the countries of Eastern Europe like Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the USSR are responsible for preserving and propagating the country's national language. But Australia, though it does have a de facto national language, has a different need for a national languages institute. English is the national language of so many countries that Australia probably does not need a national language institute of the Polish or Hungarian type. Indeed, bodies which do cover the national role of English — like the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C., or the Centre for Information on Language Teaching in London — are more specifically concerned with individual aspects of language, often not only English, within their geographical scope.

Australia's language needs are defined in the National Policy on Languages, and it is the plural 'languages' — both here and in the 'Languages Institute of Australia' — which is crucial. In Australia we have a multiplicity of languages, with multiple needs. This means in turn that the kind of institute we choose must be responsive to many different languages and many different kinds of policy requirements.

### The problem of geography: Distance and dispersal

The underlying problem in any national institute in Australia concerns the conflicting interests of centralizing and concentrating resources on the one hand, and on the other hand the dispersed nature of the Australian population: if an institute is to be located in one place, how can it respond effectively to needs in distant parts of Australia? In education we have state-based systems which, though they are now moving towards some degree of national consensus on goals, traditionally do not operate in a national context. But even here, particularly in the larger states, there is a problem of central authority *versus* local responsiveness. Language and language policy are essentially matters of communication. Is it possible to create a national institute which will *both* provide a means for concentrating and coordinating national expertise, *and* allow for a distributed network which will be responsive to the many differing local needs for language education, language research and language policy throughout Australia?

### Concentrating resources

The first problem, given the present uncoordinated nature of Australia's management of its language resources, is how to concentrate those resources sufficiently to produce viable results. The Government's Key Centres policy involves defining a field of research where Australia needs to perform more effectively, inviting applications from expert research groups and teams, and making a grant to the winner, in three-year cycles, with a review at the end of three years. This strategy places resources in one location, so that at least some research can be properly funded. It also has the 'honeypot' effect, so that other researchers in the field will tend to gather to the project which is more generously funded, because of the enhanced research environment which it offers in terms of personnel and equipment; it can also happen that researchers in adjacent fields will direct their research more in the direction of the Key Centre. This policy has worked well in Britain, for instance, for those disciplines which have been judged to be a national priority.

But it will not do merely to declare that languages are a priority area, and to put a block of money in one location to encourage teaching and research. Australia is too large. And its population, including its expertise in language areas, is spread too wide and too thinly. Unlike Britain, Australia cannot easily draw on a large research population in a single location. And unlike America, we do not have sufficient density of population to overcome the tyranny of distance. The single-location approach was taken by the National Centre on Adult TESOL at Macquarie University. This centre, by virtue of energetic outreach policies, is showing that it can not only draw expertise to itself, but also effect the distribution of the results of its work to other centres in Australia. But the work of the National Centre on Adult TESOL has a more coherent and focused brief than the Languages Institute of Australia, which covers not only more languages, but more aspects of the function, teaching and research of languages in Australia. There are two possibilities: follow the Adult TESOL model, put resources in one location, and do the best possible over bringing together existing expertise; or look for another model.

The first option — of establishing the LIA at a single location, and concentrating the resources there — was the choice originally favoured by the Australian Research Council in its instructions to the applicant institutions when they were invited to revise their Key Centre bids for the Languages Institute. There is a lot to be said in favour of this choice. It is organizationally simple; it has been well tested; and it has a good chance of succeeding in stimulating research and teaching at a single location. The trouble is that Australia is not only large; its centres also tend to be parochial. This means that there was a real risk, if the LIA was put in one location, that it would not be able to bring together existing research which is being done all around Australia. Unlike some other disciplines, where it is possible to point to one or two special centres of concentrated expertise, language teaching and research is energetically pursued at many centres in Australia, and it would be a waste of talent and established performance to limit the LIA to one centre. While the 'honeypot effect' might have some result, the resources available would not make it possible to draw all the necessary personnel and resources together at a single location. The LIA would inevitably be limited by its geographical isolation, and the research and teaching which did not fall — geographically or by virtue of funding and resources — within LIA would be partly lost to the national institute.

The solution chosen for the LIA is to select major areas of language teaching and research in different locations, to agree with them on specified goals, and to provide sufficient funding to enable them to make a serious attack on a designated set of relevant problems. The chosen programs of research build on existing expertise, so that there is already a basis for research. Monash University is to have a research program in language and society, which builds on the existing work on sociolinguistics for which they are well known. The University of Sydney receives a research program in second language learning; and the University of Queensland a research program in technology and language learning, including the management of the national data-base for the Institute.

Language Testing is a special need. Australia has an obvious and urgent need for language testing. Its variety of languages, language functions, education systems and accreditation methods are not well coordinated. NAATI, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters, operates nationally for translating and interpreting, but has little connexion with other language-assessing or accreditation bodies. But there is little other consensus nationally over the goals of assessment, targets, accreditation and testing.

The language testing issue has been solved in a special way. A Language Testing Unit will be established at the University of Melbourne, and will be directed by Professor Alan Davies, who is currently head of Applied Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh. The Unit will concentrate on the development, trialling and implementation of language tests across the whole range of language needs in Australia. It will work in collaboration with an associated research and development program into language testing curriculum and methodology at the Brisbane College of Advanced Education under the direction of Dr David Ingram, whose work on the International English Language Testing Service is well known — and who, incidentally, was among the first to advocate a national language centre for Australia at least a decade ago.

The Selection Panel has emphasized that the LIA's research programs should be points of concentration and coordination rather than exclusive allocations. For this reason it has specified that other researchers in each field should be able to approach each designated research and development program, either directly or through the LIA, with proposals for further research. And there are to be shorter-term research projects which will be managed by the Research and Development Panel, and for which individuals and institutions will be invited to compete as resources allow.

In certain areas like language teaching methodology the expertise is too widely distributed around Australia to allow the formation of centralized research programs. To cover this need the Selection Panel has recommended the establishment of Nationally Coordinated Programs, for which submissions will be sought during the first year of the existence of the LIA, to provide leadership and foci for the investigation of specific problems.

## Outreach: Distribution

But having a number of focused programs, with collaborative potential for other scholars around Australia, will not of itself ensure that the work of the LIA will be properly distributed around Australia. In order to meet this need the Selection Panel specified that there should be Teaching and Curriculum Centres, eventually in each major city in Australia. The goal of these Centres will be to act

# Languages Institutes — The International Scene

A number of countries have developed national institutes of languages with roles similar to the LIA.

The Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in Washington publishes a newsletter, conference reports, language journals, some teaching materials and surveys. It engages in research, development and advisory activities, surveys the literature, publishes bibliographies and operates a set of 'clearinghouses', including the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics. CAL serves as a secretariat for various associations. It is also responsible for advising on the funding of linguistic research, though it does not administer research funds of its own. Interestingly CAL is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 1989 while Australia embarks on the creation of its LIA.

The SEAMEO-sponsored Regional Language Centre in Singapore differs somewhat in that it has a major teaching role, offering courses in second language teaching and applied linguistics for teachers from many countries in South-East Asia. It also conducts, promotes and disseminates research, acts as an information centre, runs conferences and workshops, provides expert consultancy services to regional government institutions and organisations, and publishes regular newsletters, the *RELC Journal*, and monographs.

The Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT) in London, administered by the British Council, was established in 1966 in order to 'collect and coordinate information about all aspects of modern languages and their teaching and make this information available for the benefit of education in Britian'. (CILT, *General Information Leaflet*, January 1977: 1). Financed by the Department of Education and Science in Britian, the Scottish Education Department, and the Department of Education for Northern Ireland, it is controlled by a 17-person Board of Governors representative of all levels of education throughout Britian. CILT provides advice on language teaching materials and research on all languages taught in Britian, including ESL. It provides an advisory service, liaises with professional associations and organisations in Britian concerned with languages, and extends internationally, through its research information services. It maintains an extensive reference library, including audio-visual holdings in courses and materials. CILT also sponsors conferences, provides advisory and consultancy services, conducts surveys and has an extensive publications list. It does not, however, conduct research.

A relevant example of a languages institute for the Australian situation is the National Language Research Institute in Tokyo. This carries out applied linguistic research, as well as taking responsibility for developing methods and materials for training teachers of Japanese to speakers of other languages. Because of the much greater linguistic complexity in Australia than Japan, it could be claimed that the need for an equivalent body is proportionately greater.

There are also national language institutes in West Germany and in most eastern bloc countries.

A survey commissioned by the World Federation of Modern Language Teachers' Associations, and tabled at its November 1983 Executive Committee meeting, listed 41 institutes or language information and research centres in Europe and 'Africa south of the equator', with more in countries on other continents except Australia.

as a local agent of the LIA: to coordinate the mounting of courses in the area, the collection and provision of information on language matters, and the organization of language-related services within the framework of the LIA. The first of these Teaching and Curriculum Centres is to be set up at once in the Secretariat, so that the mechanisms for organizing the work of teaching and curriculum coordination can begin from the start of the LIA. It is expected that other Teaching and Curriculum Centres, ideally located with other LIA operations and close to facilities for supporting language teaching, will be established within the LIA's first year of operation.

What will the LIA look like from the point of view of some typical users of language services and information?

The LIA will be many things to many people.

For the *language student* the Teaching and Curriculum Centre, on behalf of the LIA, would be able to provide information on

- language courses of all kinds;
- what courses in a given language are available at what level: for instance, that Beginners' Korean is available at the local CAE; that distance-mode degree courses in Korean are available through an Institute of Higher Education in another city; and that full degree and post-graduate offerings in Korean are available at a University in another state. Advice on self-access study materials, books and chances to study Korean at summer courses in Korean could also be available.

For the *language teacher* the Teaching and Curriculum Centre, on behalf of the LIA, could answer queries on topics like

- curriculum design, course materials and resources for teaching — say — Beginners' Korean;
- short courses on language teaching methodology;
- degree courses on applied linguistics;
- testing instruments developed at the LIA Testing Unit.

For the *language researcher* the Teaching and Curriculum Centre, on behalf of the LIA, could provide advice on questions like:

- current research on language teaching and technology at the LIA Language and Technology Research Program;
- current research on second language at the LIA Second Language Learning Research Program and elsewhere;
- current research on language and society, and language and multiculturalism, at the LIA Language and Society Research Program;
- current bibliographic information on language and linguistics research in Australia and overseas.

For the *language program administrator* the Teaching and Curriculum Centre, on behalf of the LIA, could provide information on questions like:

- state and federal policy affecting language program maintenance;
- regulations for accreditation, assessment and testing of language curricula.

A visit to the Teaching and Curriculum Centre could give access to LIA publications, reports and documentation, and a selection of published materials, audio and video resources, and related materials, for language teaching.

## Review of language teaching

Over the last few months AACLAME has developed a proposal for a national Review of language teaching, in response to a request from the Prime Minister. Reviews have already been completed, as part of a national policy of review adopted by NBEET, of Engineering, Law, Computer Science and Psychology, and the results have had a major effect on planning, restructuring and assessing the performance of these disciplines. The national review of language teaching is already beginning with the collection of information on courses and resources of personnel and material. The LIA has allocated $165,000 of its funding to support the review, and will share with AACLAME the coordination and management of the review.

## Coordination and communication: Tying it all together

The LIA would be a loose federation of activities if it were not for two key factors: a central office to make sure that all the LIA's activities are properly coordinated; and a means of communication to ensure that information and materials are distributed around the LIA's various Research and Development Programs, and its Teaching and Curriculum Centres.

Overall responsibility for coordination will rest with the Secretariat, which will consist of a set of offices in the city of Melbourne, and staffed by a Director and appropriate personnel to handle administration, research and coordination. The

Secretariat will act as the hub of the LIA and its various activities, and will be the central point of contact between the LIA and the public, the government, and the private sector. (The various Teaching and Curriculum Centres will act as local points for purposes which belong properly to each geographical area.) The Selection Panel placed particular emphasis on the need for strong coordination of all the activities of the LIA. Without excessive top-down control, the LIA should ensure that the research and curriculum work done in its various programs, and the information gathered and coordinated in the national data base, should be distributed as widely and as quickly as possible to the end-users, particularly the Teaching and Curriculum Centres. The key to this operation is to devote major resources to developing and maintaining a network of communications.

Communication will involve both meetings of personnel and the transmission of information and expertise. The Executive Committee and the Advisory Panels will require regular meetings to discuss and coordinate the work of the Institute, and the various research and development teams will need to meet for research coordination workshops, on the model of the programs of research funded through the Alvey Directorate in Britian. Communication on a day-to-day basis will make heavy use of telephone and FAX, and especially of AARNET, the Australian Academic Research Network, which will be operational by the end of 1989, and which will offer new opportunities for the linking of research in Australia. Unlike the present ACSNET, which is a nation-wide computer network principally devoted to electronic mail, AARNET will enable researchers at one location to log on to another computer on the network anywhere in Australia. This means that the data-base of the LIA will be maintained on a computer at the University of Queensland, and will be available to all LIA users around Australia who can access (by direct line or modem) a local computer which is connected to AARNET. Furthermore, it will mean that expensive or special-purpose software and data-bases, in many languages, can be maintained on a computer at one location, and used by researchers elsewhere. And communication of research reports, documents, and mail will be virtually instantaneous around the AARNET network. The LIA will be the first Key Centre-like entity to use AARNET for coordination on a national scale. This kind of communication, which is so obviously vital for a country like Australia, could provide a model for other institutions and research activities.

## The future: Coordination of Australia's language resources

The LIA has an ambitious brief: to coordinate teaching, research and information on language and languages in Australia. It will concentrate initially on languages other than English, but there is an urgent need for coordination with activities in the area of English — both English as a mother tongue and TESOL — and Aboriginal languages. Discussions on coordination in these areas are one of the priorities of the LIA during its early years.

The LIA is a concept, and a vision, which has grown up over the last decade. The idea has been fostered by researchers, teachers and administrators in the field of applied language studies and language policy with a strong commitment to a more systematic approach to language in Australia. In the LIA we have the chance to set up a national languages institute of a new and special kind.

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# Developments in Language Education in New South Wales

Continuing the series on languages policy developments in each State, the following article provides a detailed look at recent developments in New South Wales. The article was prepared by the NSW Department of Education. Other States that have featured in previous issues are South Australia and Tasmania in *VOX I* and Victoria in *VOX II*.

The announcement that the Commonwealth Government would support recommendations made in the *National Policy on Languages* report prepared by Mr. J. Lo Bianco was welcomed in N.S.W. as tangible evidence of the Government's commitment to language education. The report and the announcement of funding came at a time when N.S.W. was closely examining its own provision in this area. The policy itself has helped inform debate both in professional circles and the community at large on issues related to language education. The funding, both under the Australian Second Language Learning Program and the Asian Studies Council has supported the implementation of numerous innovative and exciting language learning programs.

It is the intention of this article to provide an outline of the major developments in language education in N.S.W. since the beginning of 1988.

Those developments will be examined in connection with:

1. The State Language Policy Report
2. Initiatives under the Australian Second Language Learning Program
3. Initiatives supported by the Asian Studies Council.

## 1. The State Language Policy Report

In June 1988, the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, the Hon. Dr. T. Metherell, MP, established a Working Party to undertake a full review of the provision of language education in N.S.W. primary and secondary schools. This review was to cover the areas of:

a. English as a Second Language
b. Bilingual Education
c. Languages other than English

The Working Party was to make recommendations to the Minister on a policy to address the language needs of N.S.W.

To meet its Terms of Reference, the Working Party investigated the wide range of issues associated with language provision and examined all data available on existing programs. Most of this data pertained to Government schools with very little information being available on Languages other than English (LOTE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) provision in the non-Government sector at that time.

### a. English as a Second Language

In its Report the Working Party observed that while all languages have intrinsic value, English is Australia's national language. All Australians should therefore have the opportunity to develop their facility in English to the level necessary to realise their potential and participate fully in society. For this reason and because many Australians have language backgrounds other than English, the Working Party felt that the teaching of English as a Second Language should form part of the total education process in New South Wales schools.

It was noted that there continues to be an increase in the number of children entering New South Wales schools who are of language backgrounds other than English and who have minimal or no English. This has led to the greater demand for ESL programs in schools and yet the substantial reduction in 1986 in the level of Commonwealth funding for the ESL General Support Element has meant that the number of currently funded teaching positions does not meet the identified needs. The Working Party noted that while the Commonwealth maintains its policy of increasing immigration without a corresponding increase in the level of funding for ESL teaching, the disparity between identified need and the level of provision will increase.

In response to this and other urgent needs highlighted in its investigations, the Working Party made a series of recommendations on matters affecting the quality of ESL provision. These included considerations of staffing, teacher qualifications, professional development, the appointment of administrative personnel with ESL expertise, as well as clarification of the status and role of Intensive Language Centres and Units.

### b. Bilingual Education

While Bilingual Education was included in its Terms of Reference, the Working Party found that full bilingual programs are not available in New South Wales schools, although language programs of a bilingual nature complement both the ESL and LOTE provision. The Working Party recognised the value of bilingual programs and advanced recommendations seeking to increase the number of available teachers in the field of bilingual education and proposing initiatives for developing programs where the curriculum is taught in English and selected languages.

### c. Languages other than English

The Working Party recognised the importance of understanding and speaking the languages of other nations as a way of ensuring long-term social, economic and international advancement. It indicated that New South Wales must continue to develop its existing language resources through the maintenance and development of languages spoken by N.S.W. communities. At the same time the Working Party recognised that all students must have the opportunity to learn a language other than English.

In the area of LOTE the Working Party analysed the provision at all levels of the school system. It found that:

- Only 18% of candidates presented a language other than English at the 1987 Higher School Certificate.
- Approximately 13% of Government high schools in metropolitan Regions and 27% in country Regions offer no LOTE programs.
- Approximately 30% of Government high schools in metropolitan Regions and 30% in country Regions have only one language teacher.
- Fewer than 5% of central schools offer a LOTE program.

The Working Party considered that the place of languages in the curriculum needs to be recognised and promoted. The view that the languages currently offered in New South Wales should continue to be available for study through a range of provisions was endorsed.

After examining the implications of the National Policy on Languages for language development in New South Wales, and after considering the perceived needs of the State, the Working Party determined that the following languages are of specific importance and should be regarded as *priority languages* in New South Wales: Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese. Of these Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Russian and Spanish should be given priority for new school programs and for special measures of support to enable, in the long term, their more widespread introduction into schools.

In order to redress the decline in the number of students learning languages and to ensure a supply of people with skills and qualifications in LOTE, the Working Party made a series of recommendations addressing critical issues such as: choice of languages for study, equity and opportunity for language study, availability of resources, teacher supply and qualifications, and support services.

One of the most significant recommendations centres on a requirement for all students in Year 7 to undertake the study of a language other than English for a minimum of 100 hours. 1993 is the proposed date for full implementation of this recommendation with a review to be conducted in that year to determine the feasibility of extending the language study requirement to 200 hours over Years 7 and 8.

The Working Party presented its Report to the Minister who tabled it in Parliament on 1 December 1988. Subsequent to an analysis of public responses to the document, the Government will determine a State Language Policy for N.S.W.

## 2. Initiatives under the Australian Second Language Learning Program

### a. Above-establishment appointments in 1988

In 1988 the major initiative of the NSW Department of Education under the Australian Second Language Learning Program (ASLLP) was the appointment of 25 teachers of nominated languages to selected secondary schools above the schools' normal staffing establishment.

The languages chosen were Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish and Vietnamese. ►

Appointments were made as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Arabic | 1.0 |
| Chinese | 9.0 |
| Japanese | 11.0 |
| Spanish | 3.0 |
| Vietnamese | 1.0 |

The task of the teachers was, and continues to be, the promotion of student and community interest in the study of the respective languages, as well as the development of teaching materials for use on a state-wide basis. Schools will have the benefit of the appointments for the life of ASLLP after which it is expected that student interest will justify the continuation of the appointment within establishment. As a result of the program more than 3,500 students over the range Years 7–12 have access to the study of a language that would otherwise not have been available. Monitoring of the programs this year shows a trend towards the establishment of viable elective classes in most schools as well as an overall increase in the number of students studying the languages. In various instances this 'seeding' program has proven so successful that additional staffing has been sought by schools to meet students' demands.

## b. Professional development

A wide range of professional development activities has been made possible with the use of ASLLP funding. To support the 1988 initiative a residential induction program was held for the above establishment languages teachers. This activity focused on general language teaching methodology as well as materials production.

A further thrust of the N.S.W. professional development program has been to support those teachers in leadership positions in their schools. Given the broadening of the language offerings in the State and the number of new initiatives in languages education it is imperative that teachers in leadership positions be equipped to respond to new demands. The first of a series of two activities for Head Teachers of Languages (Subject Co-ordinators) was therefore held in 1988. This was complemented by a follow-up course in June 1989. Attendance at both courses was pleasingly high and topics treated ranged from methodological innovations within the framework of the A.L.L. Project to discussions of curriculum and program development. The conferences have provided Head Teachers with the opportunity to meet with their peers and discuss both formally and informally a wide range of professional concerns.

The Head Teachers Conferences were supplemented by a conference for teachers qualified to hold Head Teacher positions, but not yet occupying one. Matters for discussion were similar to those of the Head Teacher Conferences. In many instances these teachers are defacto subject co-ordinators in their schools and play a vital role in the viability of languages programs in schools without established Head Teacher positions.

In the case of both conferences the participants largely determined the agenda and were responsible for the running of the programs.

Professional development activities to date have had the effect of bringing together key people in the languages field to update their knowledge in a broad range of professional matters. At the same time they have provided for the establishment of mutual support structures which are of vital importance to the maintenance of the momentum generated by the ASLLP funding.

## c. General support for languages

Some funds are being allocated in 1989/1990 for the production of promotional materials for languages. To date little promotional material has been available to support languages education. A multimedia kit containing information covering topics such as the nature of language learning, career paths in languages and opportunities available for study, will be produced. The material will be aimed at the community at large as well as students, teachers and school executives.

## d. Initiatives for 1989/1990

The 1989/1990 funding period will see a further expansion in the provision of Languages teaching staff to schools. Reacting to AACLAME's 1989/1990 priorities, the N.S.W. Department of Education has decided to address "continuity" in language learning programs as the major thrust of its initiatives under ASLLP.

The choice is in keeping with an overall strategy which will see the linking of the primary 'Community Language' courses to the languages provision in secondary schools which includes the 25 'seeding' positions established in 1988. There are currently 90 Community Language positions in 11 languages in government primary schools. A strategy to establish exemplar continuity programs in up to 14 primary/secondary clusters state-wide is being implemented in 1989. German, Greek and Italian have been added to the five languages targeted in

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1988. A consultant with expertise K-12 has been employed to support the programs and funds have been made available to assist schools with establishment and travel costs.

The implementation plan for this strategy sees a maximum of two teachers being assigned to a cluster of schools which will include a secondary school and its 'feeder' primary schools. In the initial stages students within the range of Years 5-7 will be taught with an allocation of at least two hours per week to each class in the primary schools, with the secondary allocation conforming to the established organisation pattern of the schools in question. Significant community support has been shown for the programs which are currently being funded in both metropolitan and country regions.

This initiative is an important step in strengthening the language provision in N.S.W. and will provide substantial additional opportunities for sustained language learning in the Kindergarten to Year 12 range.

## 3. Initiatives Supported by the Asian Studies Council

### a. National program

New South Wales has accepted carriage of a national project to expand the avenues for teachers to gain qualifications in Asian languages. The project has three phases.

The first phase invloved a National Conference on Teacher Supply for Japanese and Mandarin in Australian Schools and was held in Sydney 1st - 2nd December 1988. The conference provided the opportunity for an appraisal of the current provision in the area of Japanese and Chinese as well as significant discussion, both formal and informal, associated with issues of teacher supply. The proceedings of that conference including recommendations have been published and distributed nationwide. Further copies are available from the N.S.W. Department of Education.

Given the identified shortfall in teachers of Asian languages, the second phase of the program involved detailed negotiations with tertiary institutions with the aim of setting up specific courses for teachers to gain qualifications in these languages. The courses are fully accredited by the tertiary institution in question and meet the standards for employment as a teacher of the target language with the N.S.W. Department Education.

The third phase of the program, which is considered vital in assuring national applicabbility of this initiative, has come in the form of an undertaking from the tertiary institutions to make materials from these courses available for nationwide distribution. In an attempt to supplement this material and at the same time target the area of pre-service training, a consultancy position in Chinese was established at the Hunter CAE. The aim of this initiative is to produce course outlines which would fit within the B.A. and B.Ed programs of that institution. These courses are to have an Asian Studies/Chinese focus. All materials produced by the Hunter CAE will be made available nationally as appropriate.

After lengthy discussions courses were established at Macquarie University in Japanese and the University of Newcastle in Japanese and Chinese. Teachers have also been funded to undertake the University of Queensland's external Course in Written Japanese.

The results of these initiatives have been very encouraging. Some 90 teachers from both the public and private sectors are enrolled in courses in Japanese and Chinese in 1989. Course results have been outstanding with group performance being significantly superior to the average for the courses in question.

### b. State-based initiatives

State-based strategies under Asian Studies Council funding have been concerned with the professional development of teachers of Asian languages. The initial focus has been on teachers of Indonesian, Chinese and Vietnamese.

N.S.W. has a large Indonesian teaching establishment but the fortunes of the language have suffered a severe decline in recent years. Less than 50% of the teachers who have qualifications in the subject are at present teaching it. A conference, which brought together over 65 teachers of Indonesian from all parts of N.S.W., was highly successful in motivating teachers and re-awakening their interest in, and enthusiasm for, the subject. Substantial mutual support networks have already been established and a significant amount of material will be produced as a result of the activity. It is hoped that the conference will form the basis of a continuing revival in the fortunes of Indonesian in New South Wales. ►

A course for teachers of Chinese was also held. Because most of the teachers of Chinese in N.S.W. have training from overseas institutions, they do not have a great deal of experience in the Australian educational environment. A course of wide focus, which provided insights into techniques of both a methodological and socio-cultural nature was, therefore, considered to be of most use. The course involved over 30 teachers from both day schools and the Saturday School of Community Languages and was based on a series of workshops run over five evenings. Topics addressed included contemporary language teaching methodology, classroom management and an investigation of the nature of the Australian classroom as well as some insights insights into the cultural context of teaching Chinese in Australia. These topics were supplemented with material on current syllabuses and texts as well as general information on assessment and programming. Interest in the course was high and attendances held well over the five nights. Based on the obvious success of the Chinese course it is intended to hold similar courses for teachers of Vietnamese and Arabic in the second half of 1989.

To supplement these state-based activities for teachers of Asian languages funds are being allocated for the provision of competitive study awards for teachers who may wish to expand their knowledge by experiences overseas. Submissions have been invited from interested teachers for the award of cash grants which are aimed at assisting with the cost of fares, accommodation and tuition. These awards will be tenable during the 1989/1990 summer school vacation.

A great deal of work has also been undertaken in the Hunter Region (based on the city of Newcastle) to expand the offering in Asian Languages. This Region has taken the lead in the introduction of Asian Languages into its secondary schools with a firm undertaking that all Hunter Region secondary schools will teach Japanese by 1990. A range of professional development activities has been undertaken by the Region to support this aim and work is progressing well towards its achievement.

## Conclusion

The picture of languages in N.S.W. presented in this article reflects the situation at a point approximately half way through the life of the ASLLP program. The funding from both ASLLP and the Asian Studies Council has provided a significant boost to the position of languages in this State. The appointment of above-establishment teachers in 1988 has presented the opportunity to widen the languages provision to include languages which had been previously taught in only a limited number of schools. The 1989/90 initiative will supplement this process by also providing vital links between established secondary programs and the considerable primary offering.

Professional development activities have provided the opportunity to refresh the revitalise key people in languages education as well as targeting areas of need especially by way of supporting a significant growth in the teaching of Asian languages.

The period to the end of 1990 will be crucial for the development of languages programs in N.S.W. and the support provided to this State under the National Policy on Languages will enhance that development.

# Around the World

**There are many interesting developments taking place around the world in the area of languages policy and planning. The following are items of interest from Canada, New Zealand and the United States.**

## The Commissioner as Linguistic Ombudsman

*by **D'Iberville Fortier***

The Commissioner of Official Languages in Canada was the first federal commissioner to be assigned the responsibilities of an ombudsman and thus be concerned with the defence of citizens' rights. In 1978 such duties were also assigned to the Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission and in 1983 to the Privacy Commissioner and the Information Commissioner.

The concept of an ombudsman as we know it today had its origin in Sweden in 1809 and was introduced in Finland in 1919. Only in 1967, however, did ombudsmen's offices begin to proliferate to the point where they are now to be found in nearly all democratic countries and in nine Canadian provinces. This phenomenon is attributable to the increasing complexity of relations between government institutions and citizens.

Today's ombudsmen, commissioners or public protectors frequently have a mandate closely related to human rights and exist in order to assist citizens in exercising their rights with respect to public authorities. In a sense, they are the ambassadors of the everyday to government. It is worth pointing out that, in Canada, language rights were enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1981 and were reaffirmed in 1988 in the Supreme Court decision in the Mercure case (Saskatchewan), which made explicit the link between language rights and human rights by stating that language rights 'are a well-known species of human rights and should be approached accordingly.'

D'Iberville Fortier

The Commissioner, like most of the ombudsmen who are responsible to the legislative rather than the executive power, is an agent of the Parliament of Canada, to which he presents a report annually. This direct link to Parliament gives him added authority in terms of the measures he can take with respect to federal institutions. Moreover, like that of other ombudsmen, the position of Commissioner was created to provide citizens who believe their rights have been infringed with the services of an impartial and easily accessible intermediary, thereby avoiding the complexity, cost and delays inherent in recourse to the courts. He receives complaints and conducts investigations and audits, either in connection with these complaints or on his own initiative, in order to make recommendations to the institutions in question that are designed to rectify contraventions of the Act. All of his investigations are conducted in secrecy, and he ensures that the anonymity of complainants is always preserved, unless they wish their identity to be revealed.

The Commissioner of Official Languages must notify the deputy head of each institution, or the equivalent, before conducting an investigation. Priority is given to making informal representations to the institutions concerned, based on persuasion and negotiation, in order to ensure that corrective action is taken as quickly as possible and in accordance with the principles of administrative fairness.

The Commissioner of Official Language differs, however, in some important respects from other ombudsmen. First, his powers are based on a single Act concerned with a single subject: the official languages. This makes him a *specialized ombudsman*. Second, the 1988 Official Languages Act, whose letter and spirit he is responsible for enforcing, is a quasi-constitutional Act; that is, it springs from the Constitution itself and thus has primacy over other Acts, with the exception of the Canadian Human Rights Act. Further, the basic feature of the Official Languages Act is that it spells out the meaning of the equal constitutional status of the official languages within the federal administration. There are three components of this equality: service provided to the public, the language of work of government employees, and the equitable participation of both official language groups. Among other things, these three components affect intergroup relations and the psychology of individuals. They have an impact on politics, as well as economic and administrative implications. These attendant factors have a direct influence on the institutional changes underway, which can be brought to fruition only if official language majorities and minorities agree with the changes recommended, or at least are prepared to accept them. Accordingly, the Commissioner is called upon to exercise his role as ombudsman in a dynamic manner so as to promote language reform in Canada in a spirit respectful of the rights of all the parties concerned.

The role of the Commissioner of Official Languages has been strengthened in several respects by the 1988 Act. In particular, it provides for court remedy (Part X) whereby a complainant, or the Commissioner with the complainant's permission, may apply to the Federal Court if this is the only way in which respect for rights can be won. This added recourse will very likely make it possible to obtain decisions on complex issues that were previously impossible to resolve. Furthermore, the Commissioner is called upon to intervene on behalf of public servants who believe their rights have been infringed because the language requirements of a position were not established on the basis of objective criteria (Section 91). This new provision provides government employees with a safeguard against administrative practices that might adversely affect their careers.

## Complaints: A key to opening doors

It scarcely needs repeating that complaints are the essential tool of any ombudsman. The role of well-founded complaints as the spur to language reform can hardly be overemphasized. Far from underestimating their importance, the Commissioners have always believed that one complaint may represent dozens, or even hundreds, of contraventions and therefore deserves their attention and that of their colleagues. Each complaint carries a twofold message, for it brings to light a contravention of a right and, in addition, frequently points to the source of the contravention which, in many cases, is systemic in nature — collective agreements that violate rights, inadequate government policies, unsatisfactory directives or procedures, and so forth.

## 25,000 complaints

Since 1969 the Office of the Commissioner has investigated more than 25,000 complaints. They have been a decisive factor in the progress made by language reform in Canada. The number of complaints received has more than doubled in recent years; it passed the 1,000 mark in 1985 and reached 2,200 in 1988. This is attributable in part to the high visibility of the program during debate on the 1988 Act in Parliament and to greater awareness on the part of the public and government employees of their rights. Of the 2,200 complaints received annually, approximately 85% (1,870) come from the general public and 15% (330) from government employees. Investigation of these complaints has enabled the Office of the Commissioner to identify the shortcomings of the previous Act and of the policies and procedures promulgated by federal institutions. It has also made it possible to recommend changes, most of which were accepted by the Government and are now incorporated in the 1988 Act.

As far as clients' satisfaction with the office of the Commissioner's services is concerned, a survey taken in 1987 showed that the investigation of a complaint leads to correction of the contravention in nearly 50% of cases (the goal is to exceed a 75% success rate in the near future) and that 86.4% of the correspondents were pleased with the services offered.

It is hoped that these services will contribute to promoting the equality of status of Canada's two official languages.

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# Tangata Whenua Perspective

## What is the Maori Language Commission?

The Māori Language Act 1987 declared Māori an 'official' language and conferred the right to speak Māori in legal proceedings. At the same time, the Act established the Māori Language Commission, whose principle function is 'to promote the Māori Language, and in particular, its use as a living language and as an ordinary means of Communication' (Section 7(b)).

### Background

A number of unsuccessful bills were introduced into the New Zealand Parliament during the 1980s, all aimed at conferring some kind of 'official' status on the Māori language. It was the imminent release of the Waitangi Tribunal's findings on the Māori language claim (released as WAI 11) that finally prompted the Labour Government to introduce the 1987 bill. The Act as it was assented to, fell considerably short of the Tribunal's recommendations, as the Government appears to have decided that the approach least likely to provoke a backlash is one in which changes are introduced gradually.

It is to be noted in this regard that the Act is already undergoing revision, and is likely to be amended.

**Photo by Peter Nicholas and Ruihana Piripi from cover of *The Challenge of Taha Maori*, Scott Raymond A., published by The Office of the Race Relations Conciliator (1986)**

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## Structure

The Commission itself is bipartite, consisting of a five-member Commission proper, supported by a small secretariat. The Commission, headed by a full-time Commissioner, meets monthly and is essentially a policy-making body. The other members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister of Māori Affairs for a term of three years. The secretariat serves as an administrative and research base for the Commission, to ensure that their decisions are well informed and well executed.

## Philosophy

In the Commission's view, 'promotion' of the Māori language involves a double thrust. The first is the concern of Māori themselves, and more especially, of those who are fluent speakers of the language. The central truth of any attempt at language maintenance is that a language needs speakers. One of the most important functions of language is communication between individuals. It is a complex code of symbols, the knowledge of which must be shared by both speaker and listener alike for communication to occur. This code must be re-created in the brain of each new speaker-listener, it is *not* acquired by transplant or by medication. In order to re-create this code, the child must be regularly exposed to a wide range of language stimuli. In simpler terms, Māori children (or any children for that matter) will not become speakers of Māori unless they hear that language spoken around them, unless they engage in activity in that language, for some considerable time each day. The Commission supports the work of Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori, since it sees Māori-medium education as an essential part of Māori development. The Commission is also continually involved in consultation with interested parties from the Māori community such as kaumātua, teachers and broadcasters.

The second aspect of the Māori Language Commission's work is directed at the Pākehā establishment. As has been stated above, the ultimate future of the Māori language rests with the fluent Māori speakers of today. But these speakers, along with language learners can expect to see recognition of the value of their language in the public arena. Government departments have a large role to play in this respect. The Treaty of Waitangi requires the Government to protect the language as a taonga of the Māori people — government departments therefore have a moral obligation to take account of the language dimensions in any forward planning. The first few positive steps have already been taken, with a number of departments adopting Māori names alongside their English title (for example Te Manatū Āhuatanga Tāwāhi, Tauhoko — Ministry of External Relations and Trade), and many others advertising positions in a bilingual format. New Zealand Post recognises the Māori names of the major cities in its postal services, and many receptionists answer the phone with 'Kia ora!'. These moves may be considered by some critics as mere tokenism, but even if this is so, the stage of tokenism must be reached before it is possible to move beyond it. More public service positions are expected to be designated as bilingual, along with recognition (and appropriate remuneration) of Māori language skills. The Commission hopes also to see more written material coming out of government departments in bilingual (or multilingual) versions.

## Current Tasks

The Commission is naturally involved in many projects at one time. It is in a continual process of consultation, calling and attending hui with a wide range of interested parties, from kaumātua and teachers, through to broadcasters and publishers, to judges and budding lawyers. A considerable number of submissions to government agencies have been prepared, stressing the importance of a Māori language dimension in a variety of aspects of official policy.

The Commission acts as a consultancy service on all matters relating to the Māori language and keeps a running database of newly coined terminology. It is also in communication with agencies in other countries who have a similar function in promoting indigenous and/or minority languages. This exchange of ideas and information allows both parties to develop better strategies for language maintenance.

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*Note: This article was taken from New Settlers and Multicultural Education Issues, Volume 6, Number 1 1989. Published by New Zealand Department of Education.*

# Language Education and Society —

## The Role of the Centre for Language Education and Research

The Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL) was established thirty years ago in America in response to growing concern that there be greater competence in international communication and awareness of global issues among Americans. CAL provides expertise in linguistics and language training, with particular emphasis on English language literacy, workplace skills, bilingual support services, and foreign language materials development and testing.

The Centre for Language Education and Research (CLEAR), established in 1985 at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), is affiliated with CAL. The work of CLEAR is aimed at expanding language resources in the U.S., and to this end its endeavours are concentrated in three main areas: the development of coherent language education programs and materials; on-going research in language education; and the training of educators who are sensitive to the importance of language in content instruction.

By its research, CLEAR has substantially contributed to knowledge of how children acquire languages and the ability to read and write them, particularly within the bilingual education or foreign language context. CLEAR has also underscored the different rates at which students develop 'social language', versus the more formal 'academic language' associated with successful participation in the classroom. An understanding of these differences is important for selecting educational strategies to maximize student learning. In a related vein, a major research contribution by CLEAR has been to demonstrate the scholastic benefits of integrating language and content instruction, and that content mastery in one language readily transfers to mastery in the second language.

In training, CLEAR has provided models of innovative in-service education. Teachers have been trained to integrate language and content instruction in school districts around America — from elementary school levels through college and university courses. In this connection, CLEAR has been responsible for identifying curricular resources for language education, for compiling a *Directory* of bilingual immersion programs, and for the development of innovative tests and other assessments that provide valid indicators of performance in a first or second language.

CLEAR has also helped to describe the current state of language education in the U.S. A nationally representative survey of foreign language education in U.S. schools showed that only 22% of elementary schools offer any foreign language instruction. A number of innovative programs are being implemented in schools around the country, however; and these were identified and described. They include bilingual immersion, content-based ESL and foreign language immersion programs. In program development, CLEAR has shown that two-way bilingual programs (where language minority and majority students study together as peer models of the target languages) are an effective mechanism for providing quality education and strengthening language resources.

### Prospects: The unfinished agenda

Despite these and numerous other accomplishments, the national agenda for language education remains unfinished. With the closing of CLEAR on May 31, 1989, the U.S. is left without an orchestrated effort to pursue such concerns.

As language educators interested in the future, CLEAR believes that a coordinated effort, with solid commitments from policy makers, will be necessary to address the challenges posed by the increasing need for multilingual competence on the part of all Americans.

- The importance of effective foreign language instruction and the value of bilingualism on the part of all residents must be recognised.
- It is imperative to continue to seek ways to increase the educational achievement of language minority students.
- Innovative programs must be empirically evaluated through long-term follow-up of program participants.
- Research on the predictors and special characteristics of bilingualism must be continued.
- Appropriate student text and teacher reference materials must be developed through collaborative relationships among researchers, practitioners, and commercial textbook publishers.
- Researchers and educators must join together in the development of innovative language educa-

tion programs, tests and assessment instruments, and the evaluation of alternative educational models.

- The advantages of new technology in language education and multicultural education must be fully exploited.

The language education needs of the U.S. will not be met unless this area is given explicit attention by relevant government agencies. A centralized institute, perhaps with a network of research sites and demonstration projects, is needed to ensure both the coherent development of policy and curricular design in this area, and the appropriate dissemination of knowledge to practitioners, researchers, and policy makers.

**CLEAR Steering Committee**
Russell N. Campbell, U.C.L.A.
G. Richard Tucker, Center for Applied Linguistics
Concepcion Valadez, U.C.L.A.

# Contributed Articles

The following articles by noted academics and practitioners in the field of language policy and education are intended to provide, collectively, an indication of the broad scope of language policy, and, individually, an introduction to some key issues and concerns in specific areas.

The views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of AACLAME or the Department of Employment, Education and Training.

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# The Original Languages of Australia

*by* ***R M W Dixon***

Language is a marvellous and rather mysterious thing. Every human being knows at least one language. Children learn languages effortlessly — and any child will learn any language. Place an Aboriginal child in a Chinese village, a European child in an Aboriginal camp and they will soon speak the language of that society. For an adult, however, learning languages takes considerable effort — there are the strange sounds to master, rules of a different grammar, and thousands and thousands of words.

About four thousand distinct languages are spoken across the six continents of our world. There are some properties which they all share — word classes *Noun* and *Verb*, grammatical relations *Subject* and *Object*. But there are also many points of difference — the verb generally comes towards the end of a sentence in Yidiny (originally spoken around Cairns, North Queensland), in the middle of a sentence in English, and at the beginning in Fijian. Vocabularies of different languages organise and classify the world in diverse ways.

‘Children learn languages effortlessly — and any child will learn any language.’

‘A language is perhaps the most important possession of any tribe or nation.’

A language is perhaps the most important possession of any tribe or nation. Their laws and legends, stories and songs are expressed in that language. And the way in which they view the world depends in part on the structure of their language. Think of the different ways in which science evolved in China and Europe; this was because its practitioners thought along significantly different lines, determined in part by the languages they spoke.

## Languages are always changing

No language is ever static: compare Shakespeare with modern English novels and plays, or just consider the difference in speech habits between older and younger generations in Australia today. Gradually, under the appropriate social and geographical conditions, two mutually intelligible dialects of a single language may move further apart and become two mutually unintelligible languages.

Two thousand years ago one language, Latin, was spoken over the whole of the Roman empire. Then the empire collapsed; communication between France, Spain, Rumania and Italy broke down. Sounds changed, grammar shifted, old words were lost and new ones gained — and this happened separately in each area. Today we have a number of distinct languages, all developed from Latin and all belonging to the Romance family. Knowing Italian doesn't allow you to understand Spanish — it is a separate language that has to be learnt, which is a definite task (although not so hard as learning an unrelated language such as Hungarian or Swahili, since there are many words similar in form between Italian and Spanish, and fair grammatical parallels).

‘No language is ever static.’

**Table 1**

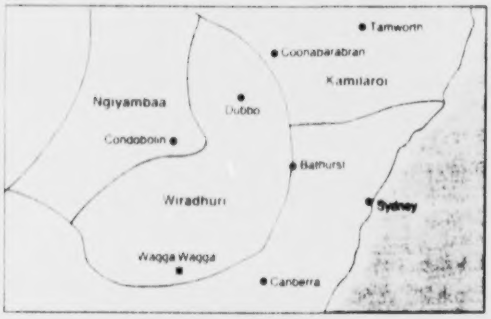
| English | Italian | French | Spanish |
|---|---|---|---|
| eye | occhio | oeil | ojo |
| ear | orecchio | oreille | oreja |
| hand | mano | main | mano |
| left hand | sinistra | gauche | izquierda |
| foot | piede | pied | pie |
| mother | madre | mère | madre |
| father | padre | père | padre |
| water | acqua | eau | agua |
| stone | pietra | pierre | piedra |
| house | casa | maison | casa |

Italian, French and Spanish all developed as separate languages within the last two thousand years, from dialects of late Latin. Many words have a similar (although only occasionally identical) form between these languages but a number, such as 'left hand' are quite different.

**Table 2**

| English | Italian | French | Spanish |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | io | je | yo |
| we | noi | nous | nos |
| you (sg) | tu | tu | tu |
| you (pl) | voi | vous | vos |

When, over time, one language develops into a number of separate tongues, grammar tends to diverge more slowly than vocabulary. All the pronouns of these three Romance languages are related. Note that the plurals both end in *-ous* in French, in *-oi* in Italian and in *-os* in Spanish, showing that a regular phonetic change has taken place.



Approximate original locations of Kamilaroi, Wiradhuri and Ngiyambaa, inland New South Wales

## The Australian language family

Aborigines have been in Australia for tens of thousands of years. If the dozen or so modern Romance languages could develop from Latin in the space of two thousand years it is scarcely surprising that the original Australian language (which linguists call 'proto-Australian') has given rise to the approximately two hundred and fifty modern-day Aboriginal languages of Australia.

Proto-Australian may have been spoken somewhere on the north coast, perhaps in the vicinity of Darwin. It would have belonged to a single group (a tribe or a nation, depending on the terminology you prefer) of just a few thousand people. Then, as Aboriginal people spread out through the continent, their numbers would have increased, one tribe would have split into two or three, communication with distant groups would have been lost. These are the conditions under which separate languages emerge.

> In most cases a language dies because its speakers switch to another language.

The map shows approximate locations for Kamilaroi, Wiradhuri and Ngiyambaa, spoken in inland New South Wales. These were separate languages, as different as are Italian, French and Spanish. Anyone knowing one of the languages would not automatically be able to understand either of the others — it would have to be learnt. In fact Kamilaroi, Wiradhuri and Ngiyambaa show some similarities — they make up one subgroup of the large Australian language family, just as the Romance tongues make up one subgroup of the vast Indo-European family.

We do not have an overall picture of what the language situation was in Australia at any one time in the past. We know what languages were spoken in the Sydney region in 1788, and in Melbourne and Brisbane about 1830. But the languages of eastern Arnhem Land were not documented until the 1930s, and by that time there was no one left who spoke the languages of Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

## Reasons for language loss

Over a period of tens of thousands of years there developed about two hundred and fifty distinct languages in Australia. In 1788 came the first cataclysmic contact with the invader. The past two hundred years have seen the gradual but inexora-

**Table 3**

| English | Kamilaroi | Wiradhuri | Ngiyambaa |
|---|---|---|---|
| eye | mil | mil | mil |
| ear | bina | wudha | wudha |
| hand | mara | mara | mara |
| left hand | ngurriba | ** | miraa |
| foot | dhina | dhinang | dhinaa |
| mother | ngambaa | guni | gunii |
| father | bubaa | babin | baabaa |
| water | gali | galing | galii |
| stone | yaral | walang | garul |
| house | walaay | ngurang | nguraa |

Wiradhuri is quite closely related to Ngiyambaa and both of these languages are fairly closely related to Kamilaroi, making up one sub-group within the Australian family. Notice certain recurrent sound correspondences — where a word ends in a short vowel in Kamilaroi, in a long vowel in Ngiyambaa and in vowel plus *ng* in Wiradhuri.

** Wiradhuri is no longer spoken; the word for 'left hand' appears not to have been recorded.

**Table 4**

| English | Kamilaroi | Wiradhuri | Ngiyambaa |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | ngaya | ngadhu | ngadhu |
| we two | ngali | ngali | ngalii |
| we all | ngiyani | ngiyani | ngiyani |
| you | nginda | ngindu | ngindu |

Just like Italian, French and Spanish, the three closely related Australian languages Kamilaroi, Wiradhuri and Ngiyambaa have similar grammars, including pronouns. Note that the singular forms end in *-u* in Wiradhuri and Ngiyambaa but in *-a* in Kamilaroi. And Kamilaroi has also changed *dh* (a sound like *d*, but with the tongue touching the teeth) to *y*.

ble decline of Australian languages. Several interrelated factors have been responsible for this:

**White insistence.** In many missions and government settlements children were separated from their parents at an early age and placed in boys' and girls' dormitories where only English was allowed; children heard speaking their native language would be punished. Even where this did not happen, the local language might be banned in school; and adults employed by a European were often forbidden to communicate in their own language in the workplace.

'Language death usually takes place over a number of generations, each of which learns a little less of the traditional language, and uses it a little less, until all there is left is a generation speaking English with just a few Aboriginal words incorporated.'

**Aboriginal choice.** Many Aborigines have decided to make the best out of the situation they find themselves in, a minority group in a European-type society. Parents who want their children to 'succeed' may speak to them only in English, the language of the new Australia.

**Shift of cultural emphasis.** People who speak two languages generally use them in different circumstances. A Polish migrant may speak that language at home, in church and at an ethnic gathering, but will use English at work and at the football club. Similarly, Aborigines might — a few generations ago — have used their autochthonous language when hunting together and at corroborees and other social gatherings, but switched to English at work, in a dancehall or in a P&C meeting. Gradually, less time was devoted to hunting and social interaction of the traditional type. As these social domains dropped out of use, so did the language that was used in them.

**Media pressure.** English is used almost exclusively in radio, TV, videos, newspapers, magazines, books and school instruction. This media barrage naturally encourages a child to speak English, rather than any other language to which it may be exposed at home.

**Death of speakers.** One way of killing a language is simply to get rid of all the speakers. In a few places in Australia there were massacres of such severity that there were literally no speakers left to pass a language on to the next generation. There is known to have been a language called Yeeman spoken around Tarooma in south-east Queensland. That is all we know — its name. Not a word of the language was recorded before the entire tribe was wiped out in 1857.

Death of all speakers is, however, unusual. In most cases a language dies because its speakers switch to another language. There are today some people who identify with the Canberra tribe and many who call themselves Tasmanian; they speak English, with the addition of at most a few words from their original language.

## Stages of language loss

Languages can die in different ways. Members of one generation may grow up speaking an Australian tongue as their first language. Many changes occur in their lifetime. At the mission or settlement to which they are sent, their children may be put in dormitories and learn only English. The languages die out abruptly, with the parents' generation; the last speakers are still full speakers of the language.

But language death is usually slower than this and takes place over a number of generations, each of which learns a little less of the traditional language, and uses it a little less, until all there is left is a generation speaking English with just a few Aboriginal words incorporated.

'There is a few languages, like Yeeman, for which only the name is remembered, and perhaps others that disappeared without even that being noted.'

A number of stages can be distinguished between the healthy state of a language X and its effective disappearance:

STAGE 1: Language X is used as the first language by a full community of hundreds of people and is used in every aspect of their daily lives. Some of these people will also know other languages (another Australian language, or English, or both) but only as a second language. Everyone thinks in language X.

STAGE 2: Some people still have X as their first language (and think in it) but for others it is a second language, with English as the preferred medium (and these people may think in English, or in a mixture of English and X). At this stage the language is still maintained in its traditional form, with the original phonetics, grammar and vocabulary (although the second language speakers will not have so wide a vocabulary as traditional speakers).

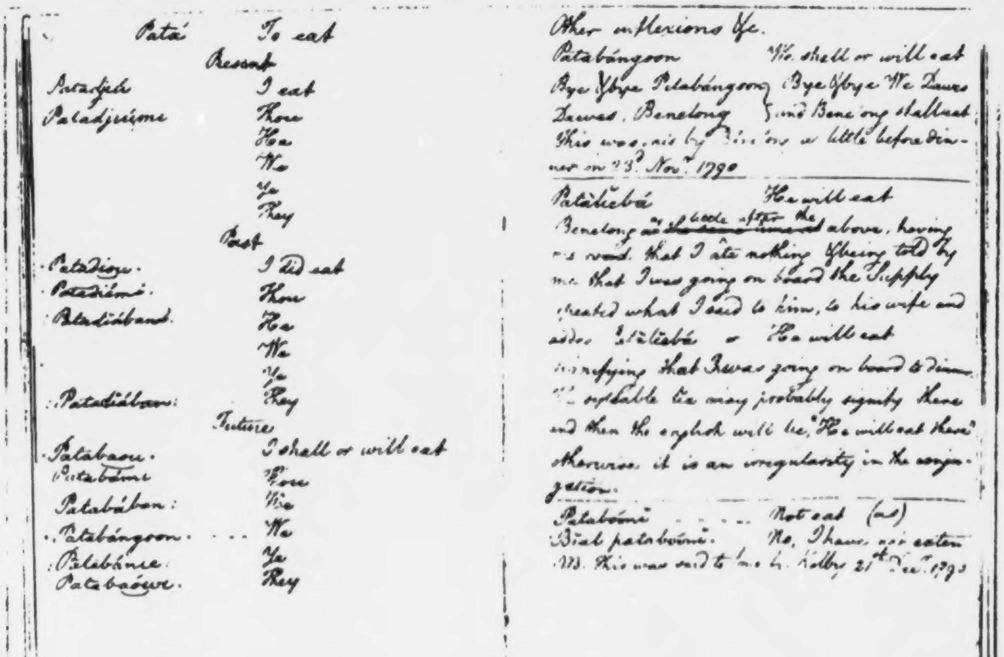
STAGE 3: Only a few old people still have X as their first language. For most of the community, English is the dominant language (which they think in). Some of those with X as a second language may still speak it in a fairly traditional way, but younger people tend to use a simplified form of the language, perhaps putting together words from X in English word order. The original conceptual system of X may have been replaced by the English system. Instead of having separate labels for mother's brother and father's brother (relations that have a quite different status within the kinship systems of every Australian tribe) they may use one label to cover both kinds of kin — this could be a word from X whose meaning has been altered, or just the English *uncle*.

STAGE 4: Nobody now knows the full, original form of X; no one could fully understand a tape recording made of a traditional speaker one or two generations before. Some members of the community speak a modified version of X, with simplified grammar; at most they will know a few hundred words. Even this is likely to be mixed in amongst English sentences. The younger people speak a variety of English that includes just a few words from X.

STAGE 5: Everyone in the community speaks, and thinks, in English. There may be a few words from X still used but these are treated grammatically as if they were English words (with plural -s, past tense -ed, and so on).

Now people use the expression 'speak a language' to mean different things. Many people think of a language in terms of its dictionary and ignore the complex grammatical rules which are the main factor distinguishing one language from

An opening from a notebook of William Dawes, titled 'Grammatical forms of the language of N S Wales, in the neighbourhood of Sydney, in the year 1790'. Dawes took down a paradigm of the verb 'to eat' on the classical model, and on the facing page recorded notes on contexts in which Benelong used various forms of the word.



| Patá | To eat |
|---|---|
| | Present |
| [illegible] | I eat |
| Patadjeiéme | Thou |
| | He |
| | We |
| | Ye |
| | They |
| | Past |
| Patadiou. | I did eat |
| Patadimi. | Thou |
| Patadiaban. | He |
| | We |
| | Ye |
| Patadiábun: | They |
| | Future |
| Patabaou. | I shall or will eat |
| Patabámi | Thou |
| Patabában: | He |
| Patabángoon. . . . | We |
| Patabánie. | Ye |
| Patabaówe. | They |

Other inflexions &c.

Patabángoon — We shall or will eat

Bye & bye Patabángoon Dawes, Benelong } Bye & bye We Dawes and Benelong shall eat

This was said by [illegible] a little before dinner on 23d Nov. 1790

Patáliabá — He will eat

Benelong ~~[illegible]~~ a little after the above, having [illegible] that I ate nothing & being told by me that I was going on board the Supply repeated what I said to him, to his wife and adds Patáliabá — He will eat signifying that I was going on board to dine. The syllable lia may probably signify there and then the english will be, "He will eat there" otherwise it is an irregularity in the conjugation.

Patabóni . . . . . Not eat (no)

Bial patabóni. No, I have not eaten

NB. This was said to me by Kolby 21st Dec. 1790

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another. Some people at Stage 5, who use a couple of dozen words from X, say that they speak X. They do so only in a most limited sense, which is quite different from having a full command of the language at Stage 1 or Stage 2.

It is difficult to get exact information on the status of Australian languages (partly because there are such a lot of them to consider). There is nowadays probably no language at Stage 1, used in every sphere of life by all the members of a sizeable community. At a rough estimate there may be about 25 languages at Stage 2, 45 or so at Stage 3, around 50 at Stage 4, and about 100 at Stage 5, (including some that are now completely lost, with not even a few isolated words being remembered).

Stages 1–5 describe one kind of language loss (which we can call Type A) where the loss is gradual. There is another kind, Type B, involving perhaps 30 languages that are dying out more quickly, effectively going straight from Stage 1 to Stage 5. Type B languages are remembered by a handful of old speakers, but nothing of the language is known by later generations.

## What is known about the languages?

Some of the officers in the First Fleet had a good education and an enquiring disposition. Lieutenant William Dawes took down the conjugation of verbs and the declension of nouns for the Sydney language, following the grammatical model of classical languages. (This was a fortunate choice, since the languages of Australia do have the sort of complex grammar that is characteristic of Greek and Latin.)

> 'It is a sad fact that speakers often do not realise that their languages are being lost until it is too late to do much about it.'

During the next 170 years, however, pitifully little work was done on recording and describing the languages of the continent. There were just a few useful grammars by interested missionaries and an assortment of short word lists by white settlers (mostly gathered during the period 1870–1910). Some languages passed out of use with scarcely anything recorded.

Since about 1960, and especially since 1970, trained linguists have begun studying both living languages and also languages that are on the point of extinction, being remembered by just a few old people. For about 50 languages, good materials have been provided or are in active preparation — full grammars, collections of traditional stories and a decent-sized dictionary; in many cases, primers and other curriculum materials have also been produced. For perhaps 110 languages we have fair materials — some grammatical information, a partial dictionary, and sometimes just a little transcription of stories. For another 50 or so languages the materials are poor — fragments of grammar and a few medium-sized word lists.

> 'Every Aboriginal language in Australia is currently at risk.'

Finally, there are approximately forty languages, all no longer spoken, for which the materials are minimum — just a handful of short word lists (sometimes, only one). There are a few languages, like Yeeman, for which only the name is remembered, and perhaps others that disappeared without even that being noted.

The materials available for numbers of languages in the various stages (and for type B) can be summarised (it must be emphasised that these figues are all approximate estimates):

| Materials Available | Type A Stage 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Type B |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| good | 15 | 20 | 5 | 1 | 10 |
| fair | 10 | 20 | 30 | 30 | 20 |
| poor | — | 5 | 10 | 35 | — |
| minimal | — | — | — | 40 | — |

Only recently has any attempt been made to instruct native speakers of Australian languages in the principles of linguistics. This happened when in 1974 the School of Australian Linguistics was established at the Darwin Community College (later, Darwin Institute of Technology).

Almost all the materials available on Australian languages have been gathered by white linguists. Some Aboriginal people bemoan this; but it is a fact that if white linguists had not done the work almost nothing would be known about Australian languages today, and most of the rewarding bilingual educational programs could not have been put into operation.

## What can be done?

It is a sad fact that speakers often do not realise that their languages are being lost until it is really too late to do much about it. Once there is no one left to remember the traditional language it will be very difficult to revive it, even if good materials are available. For an adult to learn a language is a hard task and there must be some motivation — one must want to speak with certain people who only know that language, or wish to read certain materials that are only available in that language, or something similar.

There are no recorded examples of a language, which has ceased to be actively used, being revived. Hebrew is sometimes mentioned, but Hebrew in fact never dropped out of use, being always employed in religious services.

Every Aboriginal language in Australia is currently at risk. If the proper steps are not taken, then in a hundred years time none of them may be spoken (save for a few words mingled into English).

The languages that have the best chance of survival are those at Stage 2. If a full bilingual program is implemented, children may learn to speak both their own language and English. If a body of traditional legends and stories is written down and recorded on video, there will be motivation for people to maintain the traditional language. By doing so they will be able to keep in touch with their traditional culture.

Languages at Stage 3 are well on the way towards being replaced by English. But this progress may be halted, or at least slowed down, if the right sort of programs are introduced. These are languages for which there is some chance of survival (although not, in most cases, a very high chance).

Looking at the matter realistically, languages at Stages 4 and 5 have no chance whatsoever of survival as a living, spoken tongue. They are just too far gone for there to be any known technique of linguistic resuscitation.

**Tilly Fuller (on left), who died in 1974, was one of the last fluent speakers of Yidiny, the language of the Cairns-Yarrabah region, and thought in that language. Her half-sister Katie Mays (on right) speaks Yidiny with a fair amount of English mixed in. Photo courtesy of the author**

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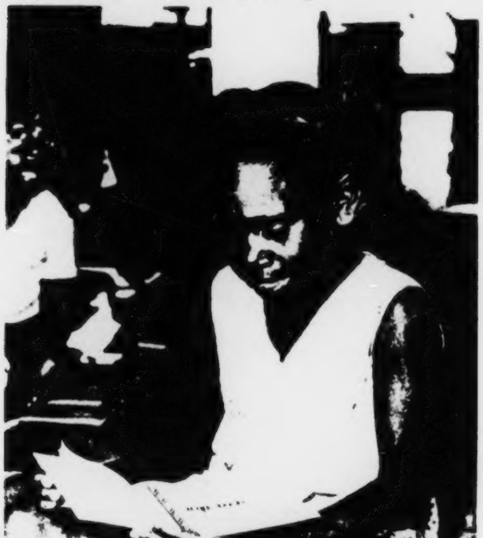
As already mentioned, people generally do not recognise that the survival of their language is threatened until it is at Stage 4 (or perhaps at the end of Stage 3), when it is really too late to do much about it. Languages at Stage 2 and the early part of Stage 3 are the ones that require assistance (even if their speakers do not currently realise this) and that is where funds for language maintenance must be concentrated.

Communities at Stages 4 and 5 cannot hope to regain their original language. They may wish to learn as much as they can about it, from old sources. This will help to enhance a sense of identity and pride in tradition. But it is not language maintenance and should not be funded from money earmarked for language maintenance.

## How can languages survive?

Every language embodies a unique culture, a special way of viewing the world. This is why linguists make efforts to record all they can, even of a language that is remembered by just a few old people and destined to pass away with these speakers. A study of Australian languages explains the philosophical stance of Aboriginal people, how they relate to each other and to the land, how they classify and utilise the plants and animals of the continent.

**Young gin from the Bamyili community in the Northern Territory, Australia, practising reading**



A living language is an emblem of a tribe or nation, something that binds people together into one community and also encapsulates their traditions, religion, law and art.

There is one main prerequisite for a language to survive: the attitude of its speakers. If parents use the language in speaking with their children, and insist that it be used back, the chances of survival are bound to be good. Many Aboriginal people acknowledge this and follow it. It requires no money at all.

Funds for implementing bilingual school curricula, making videos, providing primers and dictionaries and so forth, will then greatly assist the chance of survival. It is right that the government should make funds available for this purpose. But money alone is likely to be of little account if the right attitude of speakers — the use of the language in the home — is lacking.

Much good work is already being done. There are a number of successful bilingual programs, although more are urgently needed. Some communities are producing videos, and there is some broadcasting in Australian languages; this is a useful start and must be expanded.

A great deal of care is needed in allocating the funds earmarked for language maintenance. First, they should only go to languages at Stages 2 and 3; and secondly, they should only go to communities which are observed to be taking the first step of using the language when speaking to each other, and particularly to children.

'There is one prerequisite for a language to survive: the attitude of its speakers.'

Ideally, the funds should be distributed by a committee consisting of people who are native speakers of Australian languages and who have training in linguistics. Since there are few such people available at present, the committee could include some linguists familiar with the Australian language situation and some native speakers of Australian languages. The committee should consider each application for language maintenance funds most carefully, assessing the nature of the language situation and taking advice from any linguist or other expert familiar with it.

**Children at Milingimbi in the Northern Territory, Australia, learning to read in Yolngu Matha. Photograph courtesy of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies**

It is surely a tragedy that so many of the original languages of Australia are, or soon will be, extinct. A couple of dozen languages are still in a healthy state.

Every effort should be made towards enabling these languages to stay healthy into the indefinite future. Many Aboriginal people want to maintain their own languages alongside English and are doing what they can to achieve this goal. They should be supported by a concerted national effort, followed through in an informed, responsible, realistic and skillful manner.

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# UNESCO and Universal Literacy

*by* ***Phillip W Jones***

With the declaration by the United Nations of 1990 as International Literacy Year, it is timely to consider the role and influence of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) — the UN's key Specialised Agency committed to literacy work. Although the literacy levels of millions of people around the world have been directly touched by Unesco, perhaps of equal significance have been the ideas surrounding literacy promoted by the Organisation. This paper explores Unesco's moral and material rationale for universal literacy, and the character of its technical approaches as they have evolved over the past four decades.

## Literacy and the Unesco Mandate

It is not immediately obvious to any reader of its Constitution that the achievement and maintenance of universal literacy lie at the heart of Unesco's endeavours, and have since the Organisation was established in 1946. In a strictly formal sense, Unesco has a single purpose — to contribute to peace and security through international collaboration in education, the natural and social sciences, culture and communications. This collaboration, the Constitution says, is designed expressly 'to foster respect for justice, the rule of law, human rights and the fundamental freedoms'. This basic purpose is often given expression in Unesco circles in high-minded and idealistic terms, but at the beginning it was designed to be a functional, practical agency. The early Unesco was to mount a program that:

- enshrined a moral perspective to guide national policy formulation;
- promoted high-level intellectual contact and investigation;
- was practical and people-oriented, and
- was standard-setting.

> 'It is not immediately obvious to any reader of its Constitution that the achievement and maintenance of universal literacy lie at the heart of Unesco's endeavours.'

From the very beginning, it was recognised that once the task of post-World War Two reconstruction was well-advanced, the new Organisation's program would have a major functional emphasis in the developing countries, many of which were yet to become independent of colonial rule. At the same time, all countries were intended to benefit from the consideration of issues and problems in a global context, with expressions of the universality of humanity being seen as an important guide to practical activity, and not merely as a euphonious and abstract principle.

> 'Unesco was obviously capable of heightening tensions as much as easing them.'

At the Establishment Conference (London, November 1945) it was mainly political and diplomatic discussions that put in place the principles and aspirations just described. All official delegates were hazy about the precise nature of Unesco's program, except that it, above all, be functional and largely conducted through governmental mechanisms (Unesco being 'inter' not 'supra' national). Yet a very small number of delegates from developing countries were quick to forge a link between the general ideals of Unesco (for universality, peace, human rights and progress) and the urgent achievement of global literacy. Chief among them was the Mexican delegate Jaime Torres Bodet — poet, educator, politician, diplomat and future Director-General of Unesco — who argued that a world campaign for universal literacy was an essential first step in the fulfilment of the Organisation's declared purposes. He went on:

> *'Are there not jobs in which the illiterate prove more satisfactory than those who have been to school? This argument conceals a bitter sophistry. The more fully convinced we are of the importance of higher culture the more earnestly we should denote ourselves to seeing that it reaches more extensive strata of the population every day . . . Any form of partiality in education implies disastrous consequences, whether we are dealing with the ready philosophy of elementary education regarded as a universal remedy, or as the less ready philosophy of higher education regarded as a basis for the right to rule. That is the real issue.'*

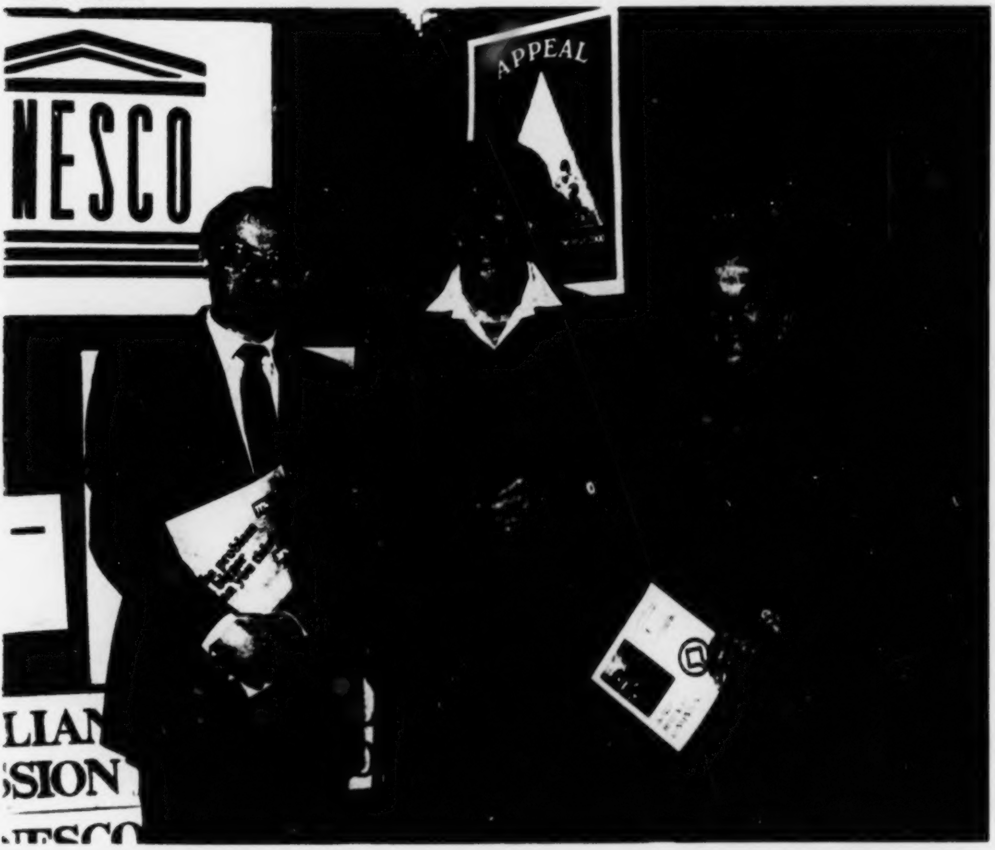
This argument came to have enormous influence among those delegates fumbling to find as quickly as possible something practical for Unesco to do. It came to be applied, not just to the levelling up of economic and educational standards within countries, but between them as well. From this time on, a climate of opinion quickly accumulated in the early months that literacy could justifiably occupy centre stage in the Unesco program: it summed up Unesco's general ideals and purposes; it captured them symbolically, being both high-minded and practical: it was of global significance: and was a sound expression of human rights in action. As a result, literacy's dominance of the Unesco program was assured for decades.

## Programming Realities

Despite the optimism and enthusiasm that surrounded it, the infant Unesco quickly brought politics and diplomatic manoeuvrings to the heart of debates, and Unesco was obviously capable of heightening tensions as much as easing them. Bitter ideological disputes marred early sessions of the General Conference. Yet for those seeking refuge in a practical functionalism (governments could presumably agree on program activities if not on their rationale) further disappointments came in abundance. Primarily because of a dramatic about-face by the United States of America (USA) government, the various UN agencies just established were largely by-passed as channels and mechanisms for USA assistance for post-war reconstruction and for economic development in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The Marshall Plan and Point Four schemes were to see a triumph of USA bilateralism, with multilateral agencies consequently denied resources commensurate with their mandates. Other western members took the USA lead and, as a result, the regular budget of Unesco has never exceeded that of a medium-sized provincial university. This is an enormously significant point, especially when questions are raised about Unesco's impact on the world. The very real limits to its resources have forced it to put a premium on exchanges of persons, information and ideas, on the collection of statistics, on the testing of a very limited core of experimental activities, and on intensifying the moral pressure put on the world's governments to

**Senator Bob McMullan, Mrs Margaret Whitlam and Mrs Hazel Hawke at the launch of the preparations for International Literacy Year in Australia**



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tackle for themselves the key educational, scientific, cultural and communications issues facing them. As a result, Unesco became very much a 'people-to-people' organisation, fostering those deliberations and considerations required before most practical programs (financed by other bodies) could be mounted.

'The regular budget of Unesco has never exceeded that of a medium-sized provincial university. This is an enormously significant point, especially when questions are raised about Unesco's impact on the world.'

The Unesco literacy program is highly typical in this regard. It has reflected, by and large, these programming realities since operations began in 1947. The moral argument against illiteracy was put in place, its economic consequences analysed, statistics collected and disseminated, new teaching methods devised, teaching materials distributed, and seminars, advisory missions and publications organised. At the heart of it all has been an unquestioning faith in both the moral and the material justifications for global literacy, keeping the pressure on governments to maintain it as a central objective, and to induce other agencies with more handsome resources to include it in their work. This last aspect became important in the decade from about 1965, when relatively considerable sums from the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) were applied to adult literacy programs, mainly as a result of Unesco's skill in persuading them to do so.

'At the heart of it all has been an unquestioning faith in both the moral and the material justifications for global literacy.'

Last, Unesco's program in literacy has sought, but not with much success, to assist governments to find an appropriate balance between promoting universal literacy through primary schooling and through programs aimed at those found to be poorly literate in later years of their life. Experience in many countries now shows that co-ordination between school-based literacy programs (for children) and community-based programs (for young people and adults) is a crucial ingredient in a successful literacy strategy in most developing countries, and for many of the developed ones as well. If anything, Unesco has fostered a tension between the two approaches, especially in terms of how educational systems are best planned.

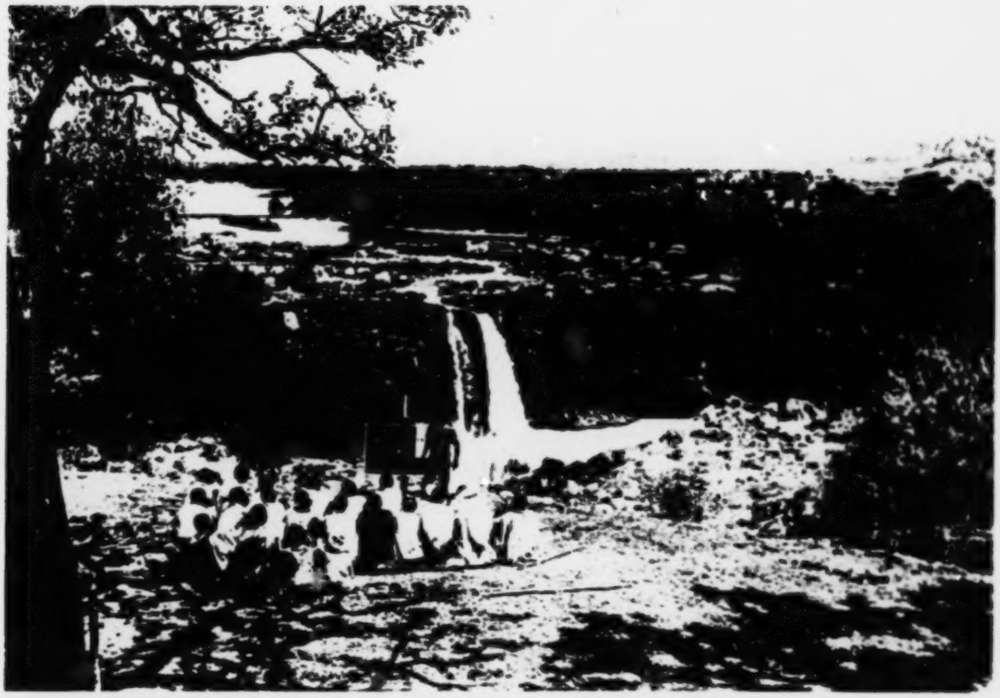
## Underlying Concepts in Unesco's Literacy Program

The history of the Unesco literacy program underscores Unesco as a reflective organisation, concerned with exploring and popularising promising ideas. Accordingly, the literacy program has had at its heart the development of a series of concepts about literacy, expressed primarily in terms of its social value and economic potential. The first global concept that linked literacy with development was 'fundamental education', a concept that was quickly put together at the Organisation's establishment and which drew heavily on approaches to colonial education, especially in British East Africa. In short, it was a means of enriching literacy teaching.

'In the 1940s and 1950s, fundamental education was seen as a special, even unique, contribution by an international agency to development problems.'

At first, 'fundamental' referred to basic, mass, popular education, directed to as many people as possible, seen as a component of democracy and as an instrument for promoting it. Later, in the early 1950s, the Unesco Secretariat came to apply 'fundamental' to the curriculum, referring to the minimum knowledge and skills deemed essential for attaining an adequate standard of living. It saw literacy as an aid to development in that it provided a means of communication, and could be applied to development work in agriculture, health, community programs, land reform and so on.

In the 1940s and 1950s, fundamental education was seen as a special, even unique, contribution by an international agency to development problems. Its approach was far broader than those of the other UN Specialised Agencies. In fact, it implied a criticism of much other technical assistance and foreign aid, with its stress on democracy and on alienating many of the 'appalling' social consequences of much development work. Its broad approach, in fact, had the effect of providing Unesco with considerable institutional influence in those early years of the UN system, as fundamental education came to be regarded as synonymous with development work itself.



Learning the alphabet in Ethiopia. Photo by Dominique Roger courtesy of UNESCO

This prominence, by 1955, was being attacked by others in the UN system, notably the UN Bureau of Social Affairs in New York which, in a successful power struggle with Unesco, seized control of much UN development-oriented policy work — forging an approach it termed 'community development'. For the next eight years or so, Unesco was more or less obliged to cast its approach to literacy in terms of community development, a services-oriented approach which down-graded literacy in favour of seeing it as merely one of a range of development strategies encompassing physical infrastructure, functional activities (such as health and education), and action to consolidate community awareness and co-operation. As a concept to guide programming, 'community development' was weak: it was at best an expedient device to cloak power plays in the UN system and to give some theoretical legitimacy to the short-lived dominance of the UN Bureau of Social Affairs over the range of UN Specialised Agencies.

In the context of the enthusiasm surrounding the launching of the first United Nations Development Decade, the General Assembly adopted in 1961 a set of Soviet-sponsored proposals intended to lead to a World Campaign for Universal Literacy. The General Assembly's stance was clear and unambiguous: illiteracy acted 'as a brake upon the advance, both of individual countries and of human society as a whole, along the path of economic and social progress'. The Assembly invited Unesco to draw up plans for a ten-year program to achieve universal global literacy, an opportunity eagerly seized upon by the Organisation.

As a concept to guide programming, "community development" was weak.

Despite the unanimous voting in their favour, the Unesco proposals did not win a ready acceptance in the UN system, and there commenced a period of intensive lobbying designed to lessen the emphasis on universal literacy. The USA ambassador, for example, argued that literacy education must not be pursued at the expense of other areas, such as general education, technical training and vocational training, or industrial development generally. Bingham's statement is interesting for a variety of reasons, and not simply because it con-

Escola
d' Adults

An adult reading class in Barcelona, Spain. Photo A Jonquieres courtesy of UNESCO

stituted the USA response to a set of Soviet proposals concerning the mass eradication of illiteracy. Its interest lies chiefly in its pointing towards USA State Department policy on education in the third world, a policy which emphasised 'the progressive building of national school systems' and other priority programs, such as 'general education, training of technical personnel and industrial development'.

A more detailed and significant critique of the Unesco proposals was made in February 1964 by Adam Curle (Harvard University) whose arguments were to be of considerable importance in bringing about the selective approach of 'functional literacy' rather than that of a mass campaign. The sorts of arguments in Curle's monograph won the day, and what emerged was Unesco's Experimental World Literacy Programme, launched, by and large, in an effort to save face with third world countries whose expectations had been raised by the earlier proposals for a massive campaign.

This then, is the background of the third global concept, 'functional literacy'. Its origins are the supreme example of the tendency in Unesco conceptualising to depend more on the demands of practical considerations than on normative and theoretical deliberation, and to develop approaches capable of eliciting wide political acceptance and support from the UN funding agencies. The origins of functional literacy were bound up tightly with the factors that prevented the launching of the World Campaign for Universal Literacy. In brief, the term referred to an approach in which mass attacks on 'illiteracy' were rejected, in which traditional patterns of motivation, infrastructure, teaching methods and reading materials were set aside, and in which the identification of key sectors in which illiteracy could be seen to hinder development was of overall importance. This very general set of concepts, however, led to a much more specific use of the term in the Unesco program, building literacy into a program of vocational education and training. This emphasis away from an instrumentalist and Freire-like view of literacy to one that saw functionality in economic, developmental and vocational terms was a direct result of UNDP funding criteria. UNDP could only be persuaded to

'Function literacy referred to an approach in which mass attacks on illiteracy were rejected.'

support the latter view of functional literacy, preferring in fact the term 'work-oriented literacy'.

The critical element in the concept appeared to be the relationship between newly trained, newly literate workers and the development, if not of their community or country, then of the sector in which they were employed. It was this link that the experimental program primarily was to test, despite the chronic lack of detailed planning in the early stages of the program. The point is that in many ways the concept was revolutionary, especially in terms of this link between development and the worker. Illiterate peasants or factory workers had often been described in the literature as being stubborn, conservative, and bound to tradition, while the implicit assumption of functional literacy was that they are both intelligent and teachable, and capable of playing the key role in the development process themselves. Here the concept had important philosophical links with the thinking of Paulo Freire. However, it came to be that all these elements were reduced to the question of the relationship between newly-gained literacy and levels of productivity, both collectively and individually. The official view of functional literacy saw it strengthening existing economic systems, rather than transforming them.

> Unesco abandoned the use of any single conceptual approach to literacy and any structuring of the program around a single global strategy.

The Experimental World Literacy Programme (1966–74) was implemented to test these ideas. It remains Unesco's most substantial practical program in the literacy area. Although several dozen countries received technical assistance, at the core of the EWLP were 11 UNDP-financed pilot projects designed to test the functional literacy argument, to innovate and popularise the idea, and to evaluate the results obtained. In all, 1,028,381 persons were enrolled in 20,000 classes with 24,000 teachers. On average, 24% remained until the final stage of their courses (a respectable figure for adult programs in many countries). Most classes were agriculturally-oriented; 55% of participants were women, and the averge age of participants was 25 years. Average attendance rates were high, varying from 64% (Ethiopia) to 92% (Iran); the average being 80%. Expenditures totalled $US27,184,973, of which 40.6% was provided by UNDP and the remainder, on the whole, by participating governments (Algeria, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea, Iran, Madagascar, Mali, Sudan, Tanzania, India and Syria).

The major objective of the EWLP was experimental — it was less concerned with massive increases in literacy rates. Accordingly, evaluation was a prominent concern, and in fact the final Unesco-UNDP evaluation *The Experimental World Literacy Programme: a Critical Assessment* (1976) is among the finest pieces of critical and qualitative writing on literacy issues to appear over the past 40 years.

> 'Rarely does one find a Unesco statement or program pressing toward the psychological or consciousness-raising possibilities of literacy being valuable for their own sake.'

Once UNDP financing of the EWLP had ceased in 1974, Unesco was quick to broaden its approach to literacy away from a narrowly economic and vocational instrumentalism, to incorporate a much more politically and culturally dynamic view of the neo-literate. Accordingly, Unesco abandoned the use of any single conceptual approach to literacy and any structuring of the program around a single global strategy, in favour of a more professional, situation-specific approach which gave Unesco considerable latitude in its technical advice to governments.

> 'If anything, Unesco has deliberately overstated the economic benefits of newly-acquired literacy.'

The irony is that this was precisely the period (especially in the late 1970s and early 1980s) when Unesco, for public relations reasons, could well have done with a major point of focus in its literacy program, a rallying point which could demonstrate its relevance and effectiveness. As a result of its professional convictions, Unesco staff adopted a flexible approach to literacy, and strategies on a case-by-case basis at the national level. Thus, literacy became less prominent in the overall Unesco program, coming at a time when school-based programs (especially universal primary education) became the focal point of the Unesco program in education.

The abandonment of any single, global strategy has been offset to some extent by more regional emphasis in Unesco programming. For example, in 1986 Unesco launched its Asia-Pacific Programme for Education for All (APPEAL), designed to promote Unesco's traditional moral and economic values concerning literacy, but in a way more directly related to the circumstances of Asia and the Pacific. In its infancy, APPEAL appears to hold some promise as a programming mechanism and as a means of sharing information, but its funding remains scanty and its potential impact on the region containing the bulk of the world's illiterate population is extremely fragile. International Literacy Year has been declared for 1990, under Unesco auspices, and may provide greater impetus to and support for such regional strategies as APPEAL.

## Concluding Comments

It is a characteristic of international agencies to seek to be at the forefront of trends. Often, useful ideas and programs are prematurely discarded in the quest to appear to be among the first to make new ground. At one level, Unesco's literacy program reflects this tendency. The various conceptual shifts outlined in this paper reveal Unesco's quest for an up-to-date, ever-innovating program. What has shaped them, however, has been a set of diplomatic compromises, budgetary considerations and inter-Agency rivalries rather than any intellectually rigorous assessments of Unesco's work.

At the same time, Unesco's thinking about literacy has occurred within a fairly rigid set of political parameters. The human rights rationale for universal literacy has had an enormous political influence on Unesco's stance, but has not usually provided detailed guidance for the program, merely a rationale for it. Running parallel with this emphasis on human rights has been the not altogether consistent focus on the social and economic benefits of literacy. All aspects of the Unesco education program, in order to secure program prominence and a reasonable share of the budget, have had to demonstrate their capacity to contribute to economic and societal well-being. Thus the program for literacy has been built upon two pillars — the moral and the material — and tensions between them have not yet been satisfactorily resolved.

Rarely, for example, does one find a Unesco statement or program pressing forward the psychological or consciousness-raising possibilities of literacy being valuable for their own sake. Individuals gain benefit from literacy when and because their environment is transformed because of the growth of literacy in society. This is an enormously significant point, and has brought about a further general emphasis in the Unesco literacy program — the stress on seeing literacy as a means of increasing technical efficiency and worker productivity. Such an emphasis enjoys, of course, widespread political, inter-governmental and even ideological support, leading to a view of literacy as morally neutral, as a tool might be.

Unesco has always neglected to explore that facet of literacy policy to do with the values inherently acquired through literacy teaching, as opposed to the attitudes and skills deliberately taught. If anything, Unesco has deliberately overstated the economic benefits of newly-acquired literacy, seeking through this tactic to raise its own participation in programs of economic development. Its technicist view of literacy reflects, above all, what governments demand.

> 'Unesco, more than any other agency, has the mandate, experience and potential to question the wisdom of a singual approach to global development.'

The Unesco literacy program, since 1946, has reflected a disturbing lack of diversity of approaches, despite the on-going quest to discover something new. What this has amounted to is a channelling of the attitudes and behaviour of the newly-literate into narrow and pre-determined paths. This temptation, common among international agencies of all kinds, is to seek an ideal, single path to foster advances in human culture, happiness and well-being. Unesco, more than any other agency, has the mandate, experience and potential to question the wisdom of such a singular approach to global development. This is the most important issue facing its literacy program, as it seeks to touch the lives of many hundreds of millions of persons whose view of themselves, their culture and their world may never be the same as a result.

An extensive survey and listing of detailed source material concerning the history of the Unesco literacy program can be found in: Phillip W. Jones, *International Policies for Third World Education: Unesco, Literacy and Development*, London and New York: Routledge, 1988, ISBN 0-415-00445-4.

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# Language Shift and Maintenance in Torres Strait

*by **Anna Shnukal***

This article aims to provide background information on current efforts by one group of indigenous Australians, the Torres Strait Islanders, to maintain, develop and revive their traditional languages.

In the multilingual island communities of Torres Strait, the upheavals which occurred following European invasion and economic exploitation in the mid-nineteenth century were reflected in changing linguistic allegiances, as first one and then a second language were introduced into the region. The previously stable balance between the two indigenous languages was disturbed as the introduced languages began to assume important new functions in Islander life. As the traditional languages came to be perceived as symbols of past custom and therefore irrelevant to the contemporary life which was then evolving, they began to lose ground to the two non-traditional languages.

## The Torres Strait Islanders

Although 1988 statistics show an Islander population of nearly 8,000 in the Strait and Cape York, it is estimated that some 14,000–16,000 Islanders live elsewhere, mainly in Queensland coastal cities and towns. Since the region was opened up to European-controlled marine industries from the 1840s, the Melanesian Islanders, once hunter-gatherers, gardeners and fisherpeople living in monolingual communities, have become progressively more integrated into the broader Australian society and economy. During the past three decades there has been mass emigration from the outer islands to the mainland and to Thursday Island, the administrative and commercial centre of the Strait, in search of better employment and education opportunities. Those who remain live today in multilingual communities, some of which are beginning to lose their viability.

## The present socio-linguistic situation

In pre-contact times two unrelated indigenous languages were spoken in Torres Strait (see map):

- Kala Lagaw Ya (sometimes referred to as Mabuiag), the western island language, which belongs to the mainland Pama-Nyungan language family, and was once spoken by both Western and Central Islanders. The name refers to the dialect spoken in the near western islands of Badu and Mabuiag. Kalaw Kawaw Ya refers to the dialect spoken in the far western islands of Saibai, Dauan and Boigu. Together, these two dialects are spoken by some 2,000–2,500 Western Islanders living in the Strait.

Although a variety of the language was once spoken in the central islands, a shift began towards Torres Strait Creole (discussed below) about seventy years ago. On Waraber, Purma and Masig, there remain only a few elderly traditional language speakers; on Yam there are no indigenous language speakers. During their lifetimes the oldest Central Islanders, once primarily indigenous language-speakers, have become primarily creole-speakers. Among the people of Kubin on Moa Island, the shift to the creole began only about thirty years ago, although the residents of St Paul's Community, also on Moa Island, (along with those of Hammond Island, another church-run mission) had switched to the creole immediately after its establishment early this century.

- Meriam Mir (also known as Miriam), the Papuan language of the Eastern Islanders, now has fewer than 250–300 'full' speakers in the islands, although there are more on the mainland. It is no longer heard on Erub and Ugar and today is a viable community tongue only on Mer, where intergenerational transmission ceased some forty years ago. The first post-war generation of Murray Islanders are 'semi-speakers' and their children have only a passive knowledge of the language. Even the older members of the community rarely use Meriam Mir 'right through' — they constantly code-switch between Meriam Mir and Torres Strait Creole, the preferred language of the children and young adults. Yet, as so often happens when languages begin to die, Meriam Mir is becoming highly valued as the most evident symbol of Murray Island nationalism and a disappearing past.

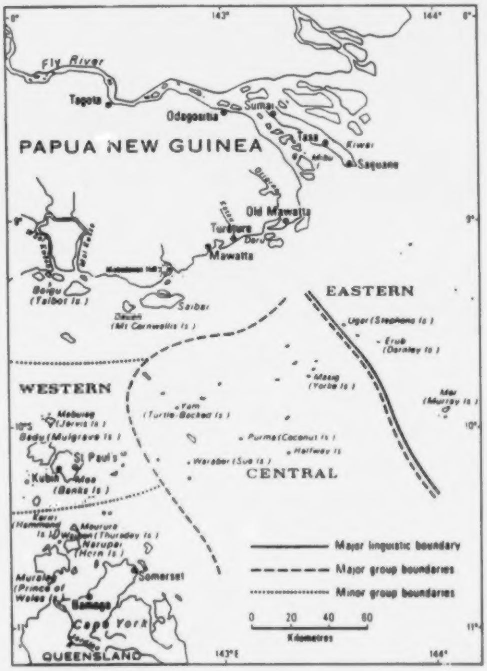

143°
144°
8°
Fly River
Tagota
Odagoasitu
Sumai
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Tasa
Kiwai
Saguane
Old Mawatta
Turituru
Daru
Mawatta
9°
Boigu
(Talbot Is.)
Saibai
Dauan
(Mt Cornwallis Is.)
EASTERN
Ugar (Stephens Is.)
Erub
(Darnley Is.)
Masig
(Yorke Is.)
Mer
(Murray Is.)
WESTERN
Mabuiag
(Jervis Is.)
10°S
Badu (Mulgrave Is.)
Yam
(Turtle-Backed Is.)
Purma (Coconut Is.)
Halfway Is.
Waraber (Sue Is.)
St Paul's
Kubin
Moa
(Banks Is.)
CENTRAL
10°
Keriri
(Hammond Is.)
Moururo
Waiben (Thursday Is.)
Narupai
(Horn Is.)
Muralug
(Prince of Wales Is.)
Somerset
Cape York
QUEENSLAND
11°
143°E
144°
Major linguistic boundary
Major group boundaries
Minor group boundaries
0
20
40
60
Kilometres

**Figure 1** Inhabited Torres Strait Island Groups

The main road on Erub (Darnley Island).

Traditional dancing at a wedding on Saibai Island.

One result of contact was the importation of two non-indigenous languages:

- Torres Strait Creole, also called Broken, Pizin and Blaikman, an English-lexifier creole descended from nineteenth century Pacific Pidgin English and still popularly believed to be a 'corrupt' and inferior variety of English. The region's first lingua franca, Pacific Pidgin English was spoken by marine workers of many different nationalities — Torres Strait Islanders, Pacific Islanders, Europeans, Aborigines, New Guineans, Indonesians and Filipinos. Around the turn of the century it was creolised by the children of Erub, Ugar and St Paul's Community and eventually became the regional common language (Shnukal 1983, 1985b).

Today, Torres Strait Creole has the largest number of speakers in the Strait — some 4,000 first language speakers and 3,000 second language speakers — and is the primary community language of the central and eastern islands and of Moa, Hammond and Thursday Islands. It also expresses aspects of the Islanders' modern identity, such as pan-Islanderness and a specifically Torres Strait Islander ethnicity, constructed through opposition to European and Aboriginal ethnicity.

Recently the creole has begun to assume a role in six domains which until only a few years ago would have been the sole preserve of English. These are:

*education*, where it has long functioned unofficially as a bridge between the traditional language and English but where its use in preschool and primary school now has official support from the Queensland Education Department;

*broadcasting*, where Radio Torres Strait emits fourteen hours of programming each week in English, Torres Strait Creole and Kala Lagaw Ya and where the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) has plans to broadcast ACCESS and ENCLAVE courses via satellite using English and some Torres Strait Creole commentary;

*publishing*, where the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has recently issued a Torres Strait Creole version of their pamphlet explaining the Torres Strait Treaty provisions and where the Torres Strait Islanders' Media Association intends to produce a newsletter in English, Torres Strait Creole and Kala Lagaw Ya based on its broadcast material;

*services provision*, where there are plans to use the creole to disseminate written health, social security, customs, immigration and quarantine information;

*an oral history project*, funded by the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), where for the first time the focus was on the non-traditional life of Islanders and the language of the project was the creole;

*gospel translation*, by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL).

As a language of literacy and broadcasting the creole will be in functional and distributional competition with English for the first time and, also for the first time, will become relatively accessible to whites. Under such circumstances and if other sociocultural trends continue, it is doubtful whether it will survive as a linguistic system separate from English. The creole may well follow the path of American Black English, eventually becoming a sociolect of Australian English symbolising Black, rather than specifically Torres Strait Islander, ethnic identity.

- English, which for most Islanders is an index of European-style context, formality of discourse, acquisition of prestigious knowledge and age stratification. Although command of English is the most commonly stated goal of Torres Strait Islander education, until recently its domains were marginal to most Islander concerns, being used almost exclusively for official speeches, church ritual (though not informal worship, religious instruction or prayer), the classroom, literacy and the media.

During the past ten to fifteen years, however, English has become an integral part of the linguistic repertoires of younger Islanders who, unlike their parents, received secondary education from native English speakers. In the past, for example, almost all island council positions were held by a few elderly men. Today several island chairmen, and one chairwoman, are young returnees from the mainland who received their education in mainstream Australian schools and tertiary institutions. One of these also holds the chairmanship of the Island Co-ordinating Council, the most powerful political position in the Strait. Their excellent command of written and spoken English (a sign of acquisition of European knowledge and an ability to mix with whites) was undoubtedly a major factor in the election of these younger candidates.

Thus Torres Strait today is a quadrilingual speech area with each of the four languages having a distinct, though sometimes overlapping, functional, demographic or geographic place within the system. The majority of Islanders are bilingual or, in the case of most Western Islanders under thirty-five, trilingual: older Islanders generally speak their traditional language plus the creole; younger people the creole and English; while younger Western Islanders speak their traditional language, as well as the creole and English which they learn when they attend secondary school on Thursday Island or Bamaga.

## Linguistic Viability

It is often said that when a language dies, a world dies. But the converse is surely equally true: when a world dies, a language dies.

In bilingual or multilingual societies a language may cease to be transmitted by parents to their children for a variety of reasons, but a critical point is reached when intergenerational continuity of transmission is halted, for whatever reason, since this appears to signal the lack of viability of a language. In order to survive, a language needs a social function among the youngest generation of speakers, but on those islands of Torres Strait where the traditional languages have been displaced by the creole, it would appear that the children came to perceive their world as so different (culturally, socially, politically and economically) from that of their parents that their parents' language was no longer appropriate as an expression of this new world or of the children's place within it.

Thus, social, economic and political trends often have unintended linguistic outcomes. Even today, purely educational decisions are tending to weaken the authority of traditional life and the languages associated with it. One example is the takeover of the outer island primary schools in 1985 by the Queensland Department of Education. Today there are European principals and one fully-qualified Islander principal in all outer island schools. Torres Strait Islanders have always been eager to learn 'proper English' but there have been few models of the language available to copy; indeed, one of the factors responsible for the adoption of the creole was its identification as English. As a result of the new education policy English language models are now available on every island and are more integrated into community life than previously.

Another example is the week-long Grade 5 education camp on Thursday Island, where western island children mix with other outer island children, whose language is the creole, and learn the new 'town' language from them. For many it is their first plane ride, their first visit to 'town' and their first experience of life away from their community, a life which many of them find more attractive than community life.

Contributing further to the weakening of the traditional languages, though again unintentionally, is Radio Torres Strait's policy of broadcasting primarily in English and Torres Strait Creole. Although some introductions and announcements are made in Kala Lagaw Ya and there are plans for programs in Meriam Mir, the present practice reinforces the idea that the present and future life of the Strait belongs to the two non-traditional, rather than the two traditional, languages.

Even more important, however, will surely be the impact of commercial television broadcasting to the outer islands via satellite dish. Although government regulations insist that 'educational, Aboriginal and rural programs' must be provided, all broadcasting will be in English. In a paper based on research into language maintenance in Aboriginal communities, the Friends of Bilingual Education (1986:2) write: 'with their economic life destroyed, tribal Aboriginal people find themselves almost totally dependent on English-speaking Australia for their livelihood. In this powerless state, the status of their way of life is challenged by the dominant English-speaking culture with its superior numbers and material goods. Television and videos have had a telling effect in this regard (and soon satellite reception will make TV available in more isolated areas). In communities where some of the strongest remaining languages are spoken, this situation has had an effect on the language of the younger generation: parents report that they speak to their children in the traditional language but the children will answer only in English. This is the beginning of language loss.'

Post-contact demographic and linguistic shifts have produced an unstable sociolinguistic system. On the one hand, there is increasing pressure from the two imported languages to replace the two indigenous languages as more appropriate indices of contemporary identity; on the other, the indigenous languages themselves are not equally viable. While the eastern island language is dying, there continues to be normal transmission between parents and children in the western islands (with the exception of Moa, Hammond and Thursday Islands) and both dialects of the western island language appear to be strong, although undoubtedly under threat.

On Mabuiag, for example, the pre-school teachers have begun to use the creole as their medium of instruction as a preliminary to learning English. Where this has happened before, the children have come to use the creole as their peer-group language and indigenous language transmission has ceased only a few years later.

On Dauan, the smallest of the three far western islands, there have been several recent marriages between 'big' (important) men and central island women, whose only language is the creole. Other small, multiplex communities have been shown in the past to be vulnerable to the linguistic influence of a few high status individuals.

Only a few years ago, Saibai children were not exposed to the creole until they left the island for secondary schooling on Thursday Island or Bamaga. Today very young children on Saibai are being taught the creole by their visiting Bamaga cousins.

## Indigenous language maintenance programs

On the majority of the western islands Kala Lagaw Ya continues to be a viable community language, transmitted normally from parent to child. Quite a deal of linguistic work has been carried out in the language and a new orthography was prepared several years ago by Ephraim Bani, a Mabuiag Islander. During the past few years, SIL, the School of Australian Linguistics (SAL) and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies have sponsored literacy programs and some materials production, with SIL most heavily involved in Bible translation and literacy work. In 1981 an adult education course for non-speakers, coordinated by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, was briefly taught at Thursday Island College of Technical and Further Education.

Although the western islands are still the most isolated in the region, their inhabitants are increasingly being integrated into the rest of Torres Strait. Aware of the vulnerability of traditional language speakers to the shifts outlined above, the people of Saibai, Boigu and Dauan recently applied for and received federal government funding for school-based indigenous language and culture maintenance programs. Designed and administered primarily by the Islanders themselves, such strengthening programs are valuable in raising community consciousness and should be supported by everyone concerned with the survival of Torres Strait Islander language and culture.

As for Meriam Mir, however, no longer intergenerationally transmitted but still a potent symbol of Murray Island heritage and nationalism, there appears to be little hope of maintaining it as a viable community language on the one island, Mer, where it is still spoken. ►

It has, in the past, received less attention from linguists and literacy workers, although a linguistics student at the Australian National University is currently at work on the first modern description of the language and a dictionary is in preparation. SIL has been involved in Bible translation for some years and recently the School of Australian Linguistics has offered classes in literacy and encouraged the production of literacy materials.

Now that it is no longer transmitted normally to the children, there is considerable pressure for it to be transmitted artificially, through formal institutional means in the pre-school and primary school. At a time of scarce financial resources and general ambivalence about the value and outcomes of language programs, however, community members should be made aware of the limits to such programs. It is also important that the teachers, who themselves recognise that they are undertaking a limited maintenance, rather than a revival language program, not be scapegoated for the community's failure to reconcile its rhetoric and practice regarding language transmission. To my knowledge, no language revival program has been successful once the language has ceased to be passed on for any function from parent to child.

## Conclusion

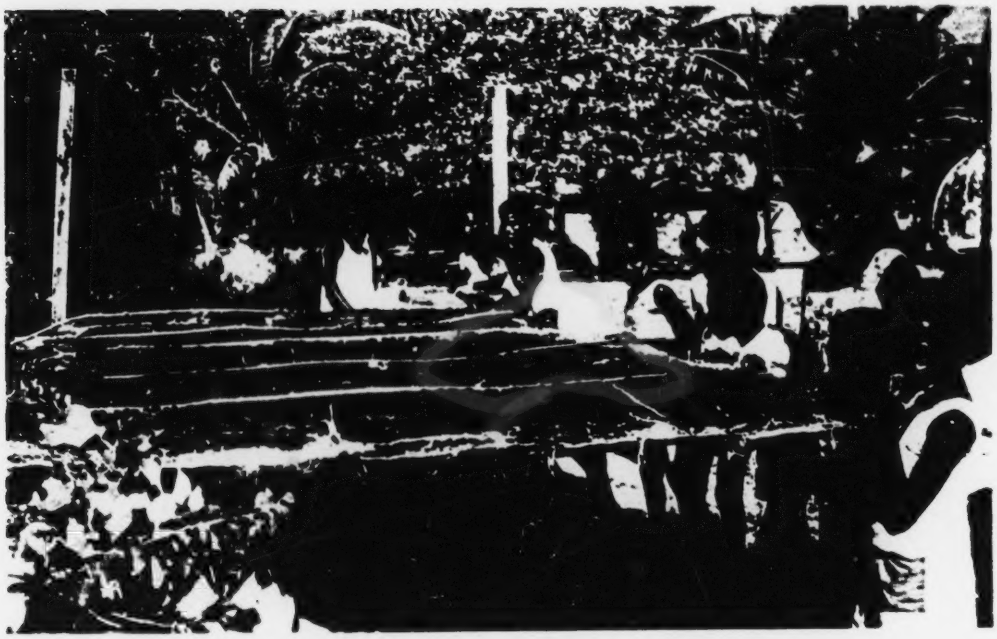
It is well known that broad economic, political, and social movements, together with local decisions about non-linguistic matters, affect language shift, decay and death. As individuals and members of communities, Torres Strait Islanders have adapted linguistically to their changing world and continue to do so.

As indices of contemporary Torres Strait Islander identity and instruments of social advancement, both Torres Strait Creole and English, the two non-indigenous languages of Torres Strait, have flourished at the expense of the two indigenous languages, Kala Lagaw Ya and Meriam Mir.

Yet there is strong community support for the maintenance of these languages, together with the knowledge systems which they alone impart. Despite this, funding of some form of bilingual education will almost certainly not bring about the revival of the traditional language in island communities where that language has lost its viability, where there are no longer 'self-reproducing speech communities' (Rigsby 1987:11), and where the teaching of the traditional language must be carried out through the medium of the children's lingua franca,

Tombstone unveiling ceremony on Masig (Yorke Island).

In Loving Memory
David C Savage



Waraber (Sue Island) school children with *wangai* (island dates) spread out to dry in the sun.

Torres Strait Creole. It is unrealistic to expect limited school instruction to revive the traditional language as a viable community language, no matter how dedicated the teachers.

There was considerable support among Islanders for some form of bilingual education when this was presented as a possible option several years ago, but in the current financial and ideological climate in Queensland only meagre resources are available for traditional language instruction. Moreover, while many Islanders were enthusiastic about programs using English and the indigenous languages, few were willing to accept English-Torres Strait Creole programs, even where the creole was the first language of the children. For most people, the primary goal of education is to acquire 'good' English (without which employment opportunities are limited) and the creole is popularly believed to inhibit the acquisition of English.

I believe that planners of successful language strengthening programs need to take into account not only the contemporary sociolinguistic situation but also the historical factors which produced it. This paper is intended to contribute to the debate about traditional language maintenance in Torres Strait by discussing past and present aspects of language shift in the region.

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# Maintaining and Developing Italian in Australia

*by **Camilla Bettoni***

Sometime during the seventies, Australia proudly declared itself to be a multilingual society. As a consequence, all the languages spoken in Australia changed status: from foreign or indigenous languages they all became community languages. Throughout the eighties, the official documents on language matters — principally the Senate report *A National Language Policy* (1984) and the Lo Bianco report *National Policy on Languages* (1987a) — have stressed clearly and loudly, the importance of maintaining and developing all Australian languages. Yet, with regard to Italian, which is the most widely used community language other than English in Australia, little has been done to reverse the rapid shift and attrition affecting the use of that language by second generation speakers.

> 'Italians in Australia are losing their mother tongue much more rapidly than their specific demographic situation would suggest within the context of Australia's language ecology.'

Before suggesting ways of maintaining and developing Italian, let us look briefly at how and why language shift and language attrition are affecting it.

## Language shift

Italians in Australia are losing their mother tongue much more rapidly than their specific demographic situation would suggest within the context of Australia's language ecology. In fact, Italians are the largest non-English speaking community in Australia; they tend to live close to one another in relatively dense concentrations; and they have a long history of chain immigration. Furthermore, their standard language, together with French and German, but unlike other community languages, was already taught as a foreign language in schools and universities long before the more recent post-war mass migration. Nevertheless, in the 1976 national census, out of amost one million Australian people of Italian origin, only about 450,000 declared that they used Italian regularly (Clyne 1982).

An overall shift of 50% might not look too menacing at first sight, but this raw figure hides the increasing speed of the Italian language shift. Clyne (1982: 27–56) has shown that, in the first generation, the shift increases from 5.4% among the older population to 11.7% among the younger immigrants. In the second generation, it increases from 18.5% among the children of intra-ethnic marriages to 81.2% among the children of inter-ethnic marriages. Furthermore, in the second generation, language shift increases with age: markedly when children leave their parental home in their twenties, and dramatically later when their parents die. Thus Italian is mainly a language used by older parents in the first generation, and by younger children in the second. Given the fact that immigration virtually ceased ten years ago, it is fair to predict that when the former die and the latter grow up, there will be far less Italian spoken in Australia.

## Language mixing

Most first-generation migrants have an Italian dialect as their first language. In dealing with the Italian situation it should be made clear that by 'dialect' we do not mean either a social or a geographical variety of the Italian language, but separate languages geographically distributed which can differ from the standard and from each other to the extent of being mutually unintelligible if they belong to non-adjacent areas. In Italy, dialect monolingualism marks the lowest socio-economic classes, but most of its emigrants are upwardly mobile people and can therefore also speak Italian, even if markedly 'regional' (that is, spoken with a heavy local accent) and 'popular' (that is, strewn with substandard morpho-syntactic features). English is their third language. As it is generally acquired later in life, it remains their weakest, even if it is the most relevant to their economic success and their future in Australia.

The children of Italian migrants learn their parents' dialect first, but as soon as they socialise outside the home and join the education system, English becomes dominant. Italian is their weakest language, because in Australia ethnic languages are rarely used outside the home domain and there is little incentive to learn their higher varieties.

In Australia, the relative position of dialect, Italian and English can be illustrated as follows:

```
      H  ENGLISH
- - - - - - - - - - - - -
         ITALIAN  h
  L  - - - - - - - - - -
         DIALECT  l
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Within the big diglossia, confronted with English as the High language, any immigrant variety used by the Italian community is Low; but within the little ethnic diglossia, Italian and dialect contrasted with each other constitute another High-Low pair. The dotted lines indicate that with widespread shift to

English on the part of both immigrant languages, and reduced use of the higher immigrant variety, especially among the second generation, there are clear signs of breakdown in both these diglossic relationships — which in simpler terms means that in the Italo-Australian community the functions of the three languages are not kept rigidly separate. In fact, if the interactants are all trilingual there are very few, if any, situations which categorically require one or the other of the three languages. We know, for example, that in a Venetian home, a parents' question in Venetian can be answered back in English by the children, or that a Sicilian butcher's greetings can be exchanged in Sicilian, Italian or English, with no serious penalties for a marked, unusual use of any language.

> 'An overall shift of 50% might not look too menacing at first sight, but this raw figure hides the increasing speed of the Italian language shift.'

This diglossic breakdown is evident also through the mixing of the three languages. Among the first generation, as tight a control of the dialect-Italian alternation is maintained in Australia as there was in the old country. On the other hand, in the new situation, given the pressure for acculturation to Australian life, English interferes conspicuously with both dialect and Italian. However, given the first generation's non-native familiarity with the new language, this happens almost exclusively at the lexical and semantic levels (see among others Rando 1968; Ryan 1973; Bettoni 1981).

> 'The children of Italian migrants learn their parents' dialect first, but as soon as they socialise outside the home and join the education system, English becomes dominant.'

Among the second generation, language mixing is very widespread. Although rapid dialect-Italian alternation is still perceived in a general global way by the children, their parents' tight control over single elements weakens and gives way to heavy mixing. Even though no research has yet shown how and how much Italian intrudes on the dialect, we do know that in formal interviews in which the children would prefer to use Italian, the dialect intrudes systematically as a compensatory strategy in order to avoid drastic message reductions in Italian: in fact, more and more dialect is used as Italian fails (see, for example, Bettoni 1985, 1987).

**During the 1940's, 50's and 60's many Italians settled in rural areas of Australia.**

With regard to the mixing of English, after absorbing all the lexical and semantic anglicisms of their parents, the children add many more of their own as their dominance in English exerts its pressure. A remarkable increase of English elements in the Italian or dialect speech of the second generation, however, is not the sole aspect of their anglicisation. Less conspicuous, but more revealing, is the fact that the same types of transfers from English used by the two generations perform different functions. While the first generation can alternate new English elements with their vast range of old Italian elements in order to create expressive effects that are rhetorically controlled, the second generation cannot exploit both codes to the same extent. They are obliged to use English items in order to make sure that basic communication is achieved.

> 'In the Italo-Australian community the functions of Italian, the dialect and English are not kept rigidly separate.'

Thus, among the second generation, English too, like the dialect, intrudes as a compensatory strategy when Italian fails. The two languages, however, do not intervene indiscriminately to rescue communication. On the contrary, a clear pattem emerges (Bettoni 1988). In on-going speech production, the intrusion of the dialect starts off with short (often monosyllabic) high-frequency articles, prepositions and personal pronouns among those children who are still quite fluent in Italian; it proceeds with slightly longer words, such as articled prepositions, various forms of auxiliary verbs and modal adverbs, as well as with some high-frequency nouns and verbs; and it ends up also with less frequent nouns, adjectives and verbs among those children who are less fluent in Italian. On the other hand, the intrusion of English starts off with some interjections; then proceeds with words which are either of low-frequency or typically related to an English-speaking domain; and ends up with many high-frequency nouns, adjectives and verbs.

> 'Among the second generation English, like the dialect, intrudes as a compensatory strategy when Italian fails.'

In summary then, the dialect and English are chosen for completely different items: namely, dialect is the favourite source language for function words, and English for interjections and content words. The distinction between function words, content words and interjections is crucial in many ways. Suffice to say here that according to a classic introduction to psycholinguistics (Clark and Clark 1977: 21–22) 'content words are those that carry the principal meaning of a sentence . . . content words belong to "open classes" of words, and function words, in contrast, are those needed by the surface structure to glue content words together . . . function words belong to "closed classes"'. Two important points follow: one is that English is the source language for more important and prestigious items, while the dialect provides mainly servicing words which glue the important items together; the second point is that while dialect words are not likely to increase (or at most are likely to increase only as tokens), English words are likely to increase as types, as the range of experience widens to take in new emotional, cognitive and intellectual developments. Furthermore, English is also the favourite source language for interjections whose non-referential, expressive, often emotional character has often been mentioned in the literature (see, for example, Poggi 1981).

> 'In mixing their languages, the speakers of the second generation not only reveal implicit perceptions and unspoken assessments about them, they also clearly point to the opposite fates of English and the dialect.'

Work on tobacco farming was usually a family affair

In mixing their languages, the speakers of the second generation therefore not only reveal implicit perceptions and unspoken assessments about them — thus fully confirming the diglossic position sketched above — they also clearly point to the opposite fates of English and the dialect.

## Language attrition

As English and (to a lesser extent) the dialect take over, how does Italian erode in the community? The first language input that the children of the second generation receive is their parents' informal home language, while their first output is immature childish language. These obvious remarks are made here because, although adult informal language and childish immature language are certainly different, typologically they present striking analogies. The differences are that the former is relaxed in a well-known world where communication involves face-to-face interactions with a small group of intimates who share much of the pragmatic presuppositions about their universe and its social structure; while the latter is tense in a strange world where babies have urgent needs to communicate and few means to express them. Yet the similarities are that, postulating a continuum of communicative modes which has at one pole the pragmatic mode and at the other the syntactic mode, both the adult informal language and the childish immature language can be placed towards the pragmatic pole. The reason is that both, because of their extremely relaxed (informal language) and extremely tense (childish language) production, do not require careful planning and tight control.

Like all other children, as they grow up, children of Italo-Australian families do not lose their childish pragmatic language completely, but learn to use it only when the situation requires it. They learn to control it and to alternate it with a more developed syntactic-type adult language which is the result of more careful planning and tighter control, and is thus capable of expressing a wider range of topics, of performing more complex tasks, in less immediate, less obvious, more abstract contexts. But the natural progression from the pragmatic mode to the syntactic mode, which monolingual children develop within their mother tongue as their communicative needs grow and become more complex, does not develop in Italo-Australian children within their dialect or Italian, but across languages, in English. For them everything that is new, everything that they experience outside the home is English, not only the formal reality of the school, but also the reality of their peer group in the neighbourhood. Even their older siblings who have already gone to school bring English into the home.

The natural progression from the pragmatic mode to the syntactic mode does not develop in Italo-Australian children within their dialect or Italian, but across languages, in English.

In brief, long before adolescence, well before language is fully developed and acquisition of the mother tongue stops (or slows down), English surrounds the children with all its syntactic models: adult as well as childish, formal as well as informal, written as well as spoken, etc. On the other hand,

Young Italo-Australian girls

the ethnic languages, simple family tools, get little help from the outside world. Neglected and undeveloped, they fossilise. A few chats in the neighbourhood, some relative visiting from Italy, a few films shown by the Special Broadcasting Service are not enough.

Thus, with regard to their home languages, Italo-Australian children remain too close to the pragmatic pole in the pragmatic-to-syntactic continuum. A vicious circle sets in: an inadequate tool is abandoned: through lack of use it rusts still further. Even in those families where parents insist on the use of either the dialect or Italian, as we have seen above, English interferes substantially. Hence, to the two contrastive pairs just mentioned (childish-adult, and informal-formal language), a third pidgin-creole pair should be added.

## Language attitudes

How do people feel about the languages actually spoken in their community? There are two opposing ways of looking at this mixed and eroded language of the second generation. One is purist and stresses its shortcomings, not only compared with the language of the first generation, but also compared with standard Italian in Italy. The other is more generous and stresses its undeniable, if limited, communicative achievements. In a multicultural nation, such as Australia believes itself to be, any language resource should be treasured, and the younger generations should be praised for using their community language(s) as much as possible. This in turn will ensure that bilingualism is not only maintained but also developed.

'A few chats in the neighbourhood, some relative visiting from Italy, a few films shown by the Special Broadcasting Service are not enough.'

A congenial environment that rewards any ethnic language practice, however, has not been created in the Italo-Australian community. As far as its own members are concerned, little clemency is shown towards digressions from the purist norm. A matched-guise experiment which measured the community's attitudes towards its own varieties has produced unequivocal results (Bettoni and Gibbons 1988). Tapes of five different language varieties were played to a cross-section of the community in Sydney: Italian, dialect, English, a light mixture (with some English transfers on a regional Italian base) and a heavy mixture (with a lot of English transfers on a dialect base). Among a wide range of possible mixtures, these rather extreme light and heavy mixtures were chosen as representative respectively of first-generation parents when they give their best, most formal, polished performance, and of second-generation children when they speak in the relaxed home and neighbourhood environment. Subjects also were asked to evaluate the voices they heard (but it was always the same person speaking) on twelve parameters that included both solidarity-oriented traits (such as likeable-unpleasant and mate-stranger) and power-oriented traits (such as rich-poor and educated-uneducated).

'In a multicultural nation, such as Australia believes itself to be, any language resource should be treasured, and the younger generations should be praised for using their community language/s as much as possible.'

Within the Italo-Australian community, both Italian and English rate favourably on all traits. The light mixture elicits unmarked, neutral responses for most traits. The dialect too, scores close to the mean for solidarity traits, though less well for power-oriented traits. On the other hand, when dialect is mixed with English to form the heavy mixture, it is strongly stigmatised on all traits. Its speakers are considered unpleasant, uneducated, poor, unreliable, ugly, etc.

'A new continuum emerges which has at the lowest pole the dialect mixed with English, and at the higher pole both English and Italian, as long as the latter is free from English intrusions.'

Long-entrenched pre-migration prejudices condemning the dialect and favouring Italian combine in Australia with new post-migration attitudes condemning English interference and praising 'pure' codes. A new continuum emerges which has at the lowest pole the dialect mixed with English, and at the highest pole both English and Italian, as long as the latter is free from English intrusions. Leaving English aside as the unquestioned high language in the big diglossic situation, and concentrating now on the little ethnic diglossia, we note that by assigning their best ratings to Italian, Italo-Australian people have clearly indicated their desire to break out of the narrow confines of both their original dialect and their new Australian mixture. At the same time, however, by assigning their worst ratings to the heavy mixture, which is the most widespread variety among the second generation, they have also revealed their despair at ever fulfilling this desire under the present circumstances.

## Conclusion

The gap between the coveted standard Italian on the one hand, and the despised eroding mixture actually used within the Italo-Australian community on the other, is too great to be bridged without help. The figures on language shift show this clearly. If Australia were seriously interested in maintaining and developing its language resources, it would intervene and break the vicious circle of spiralling language attrition, by helping the ethnic language of the young second-generation along both the pragmatic-to-syntactic and the dialect-to-Italian paths.

'If Australia was seriously interested in maintaining and developing its language resources, it would intervene and break the vicious circle of spiralling language attrition.'

Instead, schools have not only failed to intervene, but have often actively discouraged language maintenance and development. True, Italian is now the principal language other than English studied in Australia, with 230,000–260,000 students taking it, 70% of whom are at primary level, 28% at secondary level and 2% at tertiary level (Di Biase, in press). But in terms of language maintenance and development these high figures remain ineffectual. In fact, the great majority (80–90%) of all primary school pupils studying Italian are found in the so-called insertion classes, which include too few children of Italian descent (2–3%), and, in any case, in forty minutes tuition a week do not reach viable results (Lo Bianco 1987b). Furthermore, failing to differentiate between monolingual Anglo-Celtic children (or children of other ethnic groups with no experience of Italian) and bilingual Italo-Australian children, Australian schools either ignore the language skills of the second generation and place all children in beginners' classes, or overestimate their skills and place them in advanced classes. In the first case, schools condemn the children to boredom, if not to sheer frustration and dismay, when the children realise that their childish and informal native tongue is much more genuine than the fictitious, stilted, formal language of their (all too often) anglophone teacher. In the second case, schools punish the children for not using properly the more adult formal language concocted by teachers and textbooks.

'Accepting the local language as a productive starting point upon which to build does not mean that it should be proposed as the goal to reach.'

It is ironic that after declaring Italian a community language, most Australian schools have decided to either ignore or despise the very language spoken by the community. True again that the Italo-Australia community itself has negative attitudes towards the mixed language that children bring to the class. But, of course, accepting the local language as a productive starting point upon which to build does not mean that it should be proposed as the goal to reach. The community clearly and emphatically wants Italian for its children: if we are already half way there why not recognise it?

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# Literature and Language Learning

*by* ***Tim Mehigan***

Defending the value of a liberal education may appear an unlikely undertaking given the current of opinion against the humanities. Recent formulations of policy for higher education by the Federal Government constitute a challenge to the view that the humanities have intrinsic value beyond the need to provide service courses and train young people for a job — preferably in business or industry. Allan Bloom's diagnosis of the plight of the humanities in America in *The Closing of the American Mind* makes it clear that this crisis of confidence in the humanities is being felt beyond our shores as well. And yet, amidst all calls to restructure higher education in Australia and make it more sensitive and adaptable to national economic priorities, the need to understand clearly the broader function of the humanities — that they offer instruction on what is desirable to know about humanity — is more urgent than ever. In this article I will make a case for a literary focus in language learning and teaching conducted at the tertiary level.

> 'Amidst all calls to restructure higher education in Australia and make it more sensitive and adaptable to national economic priorities, the need to understand clearly the broader function of the humanities is more urgent than ever.'

What should represent the aims of an education in humanities? I know of no better definition of its objectives than that Socratic question reformulated by Bloom: how one should live. It is a question made unfashionable by the demise of the notion of truth and the concomitant rise of modern theories of interpretation, such as deconstructionism, which have rejected traditional claims to address the theoretical whole and extolled the interpretative process at their expense. It is worth adding here that the spirit of Bloom's book has been poorly understood and seriously misrepresented both within Australia and in Bloom's native America. As far as I can judge, Bloom, by refocussing debate on the intended goals of a liberal education, does not mean to distort those goals nor to deny their manifold nature but, on the contrary, to safeguard that universal centre that makes such goals — in their diversity — possible.

> 'Fashion — and the need to appear relevant — have led much of the humanities off in pseudo-scientific directions.'

The issue of what is fashionable about knowledge cannot be underestimated. Bloom describes clearly how parts of the humanities have attempted to ally themselves with the social sciences in order to appear useful. This has to some extent required them to search for the predictable about mankind and seek prescriptive solutions for human behaviour even though the study of humanity shows it is notoriously resistant to such views. Fashion — and the need to appear relevant — have led off much of the humanities in pseudo-scientific directions and made attempts to address the function of a liberal education appear decidedly old hat. The way has been thrown open, for example, to economics and economists who, availing themselves of the same fashionable criteria, consider the free market as the basic social phenomenon, the rational expression of human relations to be understood scientifically. The irony — a point well made by Bloom — is that the scientific investigation of the human being takes no account of what is irreducible or ineffable about that being and certainly sets no store by his pursuit of happiness. In sum: 'Civilization, practically identical to the free market and its results, threatens happiness and dissolves community' (p. 362).

> 'Developments in technical innovation in the labour force will increasingly require the sort of broad thinking skills that the humanities have been accustomed to providing.'

Humanities are now under huge financial pressures. Foreign language departments, with the exception of Japanese and a very few Asian languages, are especially endangered even though current large trade imbalances with European countries like West Germany argue persuasively not merely for their preservation but for their growth and extension. Today's competitive global economy requires the sophisticated language skills that existing tertiary language departments already provide. The pity of it is that the skills they offer are almost completely ignored. The same may be said of the humanities in general, since it is likely that developments in technological innovation in the labour force will increasingly require the sort of broad thinking skills that the humanities have always been accustomed to providing. It is instructive in this regard to consider the close connection between ethnic-national languages and the technical languages of professional sub-cultures. The languages generated by technological innovation, particularly in the information and communication industries, require an increasingly high level of technical literacy and a return to language as the basic goal of schooling. Kessler and Quinn show that the wider the range, or repertoire, of language controlled by individuals, the greater their capacity of range over more fields of discourse with complexity and sophistication. Indeed bilingual children are shown to have significant advantages over their monolingual peers when it comes to both divergent and convergent thinking in scientific reasoning.

> 'Bilingual children are shown to have significant advantages over their monolingual peers when it comes to both divergent and convergent thinking in scientific reasoning.'

While this suggests a strong case for the cultivation of foreign languages within our tertiary institutions, opposite trends are now everywhere in evidence. Literature, by which I mean the accumulated body of a culture's literature, has also become somewhat of an unfashionable field of study within language departments and these days is usually expunged from course descriptions in departmental handbooks.

Most language departments are now expressly urged to isolate the study of foreign literatures from language study so that students may be served dispassionate dollops of unadulterated language, even though every language teacher knows that there can be no language learning without the culture that literature of any length talks about. The fear is that the study of literature might be pursued for its own sake, that literature might have unpleasant things to say about the untrammelled acquisition of wealth for its own sake, that basic human aspirations might not be exhausted in the interplay of market forces within the free economy.

> 'Our society is beginning to resemble a well run machine, mechanically sound but souless.'

The current lack of interest in literature in many areas of the humanities is hard to understand. There is no doubt that a society needs to be productive and to be managed efficiently. These are the tangible aspects, measured in profit and loss, import and export and the provision of material benefits to citizens. But there are intangible things as well without which even the most wealthy national economy is impoverished. Our society is beginning to resemble a well run machine, mechanically sound but soulless. We refine relentlessly our metal shell that carries us in ever greater comfort and with ever greater speed through a natural environment we scarcely notice, much less appreciate. We, the fully insured, fully paid up passengers, have no sense of destination and are increasingly indifferent to the reasons for our journey.

> 'Literature both instructs and enriches, and it does so by considering and judging the past.'

I believe strongly that we need to recover this interest in ourselves. In the value of our lives. Literature helps us do this. Literature complicates our view of ourselves by portraying individuals and groups in situations that, though rarely strictly real, are nevertheless genuine. Literature debates both private and public issues; it deals with the way we make judgements and why our behaviour in society is subject to proper constraints. Literature celebrates wisdom, upholds freedom and teaches tolerance; literature describes the yearning of the human spirit and expressly defends its worth. In short, literature both instructs and enriches, and it does so by considering and judging the past.

> 'Society needs to know about the past, how past thinkers reflected on their age and what they deemed laudable and damnable.'

My argument is that society needs to know about the past, how past thinkers reflected on their age and what they deemed laudable and damnable about their age. What these thinkers pass on in all national literatures is concerned knowledge which should unashamedly inform the curricula of departments of the humanities and be offered confidently as the basis for a liberal education. Good literature has traditionally been, and should continue to be, measured against its ambition to address the question of how one should live. There are cultural, historical and even sexual factors which condition precisely how this question is put, and a variety of methods — both scientific and unscientific, both up to date and traditional — is required to analyse how these factors operate in their specific context. Where new ways to understand literature are attempted, they should attract funding, even if they end up making little contribution to the scientific understanding of humanity or to its material well-being but confirm the non-rational pursuit of happiness. In all cases what is important is that the message of good books should be understood undistorted by our perspective in the present and offered to minds both mature and maturing in the spirit in which they were written.

'Where new ways to understand literature are attempted, they should attract funding, even if they end up making little contribution to the scientific understanding of humanity or to its material well-being but confirm the non-rational pursuit of happiness.'

Good books and good literature are terms I use carefully. In the wake of the publication of Bloom's book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, there has been considerable debate about what constitutes a canonical text, and the point has been made correctly that white, male and Western literature should not necessarily hold sway when there is a wealth of valuable literature that is neither white, male nor Western in origin. These criticisms, however, do not distract debate; they in fact sharpen its focus. Discussion over what constitutes the proper curriculum is desirable and indeed should be spirited when so much is at stake.

'The point has been made correctly that white, male, and Western literature should not necessarily hold sway when there is a wealth of literature that is neither white, male or Western in origin.'

The study of good books written in the past will always involve criticism of the past and may also imply criticism of the present as well. This is its function — to appraise what is worth preserving and to discard what is not. Those who appraise their time and are remembered commend themselves to the present because they speak out a message recognized in the present by its sincerity, its appeal to a universal sensibility we have until recently been accustomed to calling truth. Higher education is the only forum society has whose main task is to debate how these messages are best understood and to provide the intelligent and the interested with a way of gaining meaningful access to them. The point is that reflection on important information about past societies and the individuals who inhabited them; is not only desirable for our present sense of humanity, it is one of the vital elements that make our community cohere.

People, diverse in age, culture and social organization, find their way to one another through an understanding of what makes them share basic human concerns. These are the things that the literature of all nations tells us about, these are the reasons the literature of other countries is taught and studied. Clearly, then, the study of *all* national literatures has an immutable place within the tertiary education curriculum — not only our own literature, of course, but not least our own either.

'Most importantly of all, we read and study the literature of other nations because we need to understand the place we occupy in that community of nations.'

Most importantly of all, we read and study the literature of other nations because we need to understand the place we occupy in that community of nations. Such understanding will have tangible economic rewards, the prosperity we will then enjoy will be spiritual as well as material.

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# The Interview Test of English as a Second Language –

## Mapping Progress at Lower ASLPR Levels

*by* ***Patrick Griffin, Lyn Martin*** *and* ***Barry Tomlinson***

The development of the Interview Test of English as a Second Language (ITESL) was undertaken by the Curriculum Branch of the Victorian Education Department in 1985, 1986 and revised in 1987–88. The initial work was in response to a request from the Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) for an assessment instrument which would assist in the evaluation of outcomes of ESL courses. It was requested that the instrument show finer gradations in the measurement of student achievement than were currently available using the Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating Scale (ASLPR). (Ingram, 1984). The ASLPR designates 7 levels in language ability ranging from *no proficiency* to *native like*. Informal divisions of the ASLPR levels were already in use in the classification of students in the levels up to Level 2 (those of interest to the AMES) on the scale. Teachers variously described their students as 'good 1's', 'weak 2's' and so on. It took some time for the project team to understand what was meant by a teacher who announced that a student was a good one!

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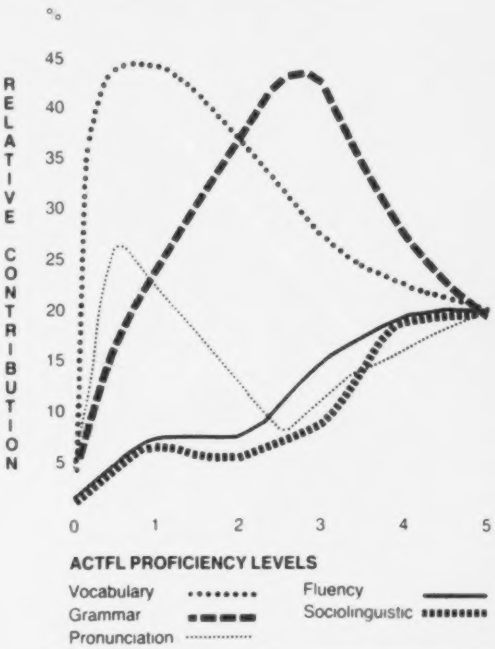
Assessment of ESL is a very emotional area. The search for a graded series of tasks for an interview revealed adherents to various approaches to language teaching and assessment, with commitments to one syllabus or approach, or one theory or one theme. They could be imagined as a series of groups standing in different places, adopting different philosophies, different approaches and different theories. It was as if each group had drawn a circle around itself, raised an umbrella of rhetoric, stood under that umbrella and declared everything inside that umbrella as right, and everyone outside, as wrong. As the team moved from one group to the next, it seemed to them that there had been a failure of communication between groups whose very reason for existence was the development of communication skills in others.

In addition to the disarray that exists in the field, the team faced the situation of multiple approaches to teaching and multiple syllabi in the classrooms of the Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES). Within one program there could be a completely functional approach, a completely grammatical approach, a socio-cultural approach and a psycholinguistic approach to language development. The task was to identify a screening test which could be used for placing students in courses. The agenda was to examine all the objectives of the AMES courses and develop a screening test based on those objectives. It seemed impossible. Add to that the polemics of belief and the problem looked even harder. There was also the dimensionality debate. It was decided to step back and start from first principles.

The literature revealed that the Johnston and Pienemann (1984) model had a great deal of currency with teachers at the time. It also showed that other approaches have a similar degree of acceptability. There was the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) material and the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) classifications (Liskin-Gasparro, 1984). Whatever was produced had to be related in some way to the

**Figure 1** Higgs and Clifford Hypothetical Relative Contribution Model



ASLPR because of its utility, its ubiquity across the courses, and the extent of the teachers' knowledge of its rating system.

An additional theory that offered a great deal was the contributory model of Higgs and Clifford (1982). Working with language instructors, they had identified five specific areas that were most pertinent to language development. Their model examined the relative contribution of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and socio-cultural aspects. These are shown in Figure 1.

> 'Assessment of ESL is a very emotional area.'

The levels across the bottom of the graph are the ACTFL classifications or the FSI gradations up to five. Along the vertical axis is the relative contribution that each of these makes at each of the different levels of language development. The bottom part of the graph shows the part of language development important to the AMES at the time of the project. The heavy dotted line represents vocabulary whose relative importance peaks rapidly, indicating that at first a vocabulary must be established. Then grammatical competence appears, in the early proficiency development levels, to be of increasing relative importance, followed by pronunciation. These are not absolute measures of importance. If the heights of all the lines at any given point along the proficiency level axis are added they sum to 100. So they are relative estimates of importance. The figure indicates that vocabulary is most important early, then pronunciation then grammar and so on. As the students reach level three, the order of relative contribution is grammar, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation and socio-cultural element. By the time the students reach native-like proficiency, all components have the same relative contribution. Since the project concentrated on levels equivalent to levels 0, 1 and 2 the model informed us that our most important aspects would be vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar.

## Method

Classroom observations, listening to the way in which teachers were intuitively assessing students provided an initial guide. When teachers teach they are continually asking questions, checking, getting feedback and there is a large amount of informal, intuitive assessment occurring. In observing the teachers, the team attempted to mimic that informal and intuitive style of questioning in an interview in order to take the learning, the teaching and the assessment and blend it all together. However, a large number of teachers used an approach to questioning in the classroom which was a verbal equivalent of sentence completion. They would, for example, point to something and say, 'This is a . . .?'. It would be very difficult to model an entire interview on that. A detailed report of these procedures is given in the report (Griffin et al, 1986).

The Johnston and Pienemann stages of development were also taken into account. Other influences were the hierarchical theories of learning, in particular the Gagne' (1977) model. If we take the stages of learning that Gagne' identified, *chaining* is just the production of sounds without differentiation. *Discrimination* is the pronunciation of words, the separation of words and word order and being able to tell one word from another, being able to hear the beginning and end of words and being able to separate them from one another. Being able to conceptualize, in concrete terms and in abstract terms, form the next stages of development. *Rule-using* involves the combination of many concepts and the application of these to structural and social rules of language. *Problem-solving* involves the application of rules to address specific functions and problem-situations based in language. Finally, *cognitive strategies* involve the creative use of language manifested in humour, in poetry, in irony and in creative expression. It is a cumulative hierarchy, as one strategy might involve many problem solutions; one problem might involve the application of many rules; one rule many concepts and so on.

> 'It seemed that there had been a lack of communication between groups whose very reason for existence was the development of communication skills in others.'

Johnston's (1985) explanation of the six stages of development in the Johnston and Pienemann model also illustrates a great similarity to the first four or five of the Gagne' progression. However, their implicational model was conceived and analyzed as deterministic. Johnston used Guttman's (1945) deterministic analysis of his data. Nevertheless, the input of the three approaches blended in quite well. The analysis of course materials, interviews with teachers, analyses of clas-

**Table 1** Cross Reference of Johnston & Pienemann Model and the ITESL
LEARNING THEORY WITH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

| | Stage | Task | Element | P + J Code | P + J Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | chaining | Name common objects | nouns | words formulae | 1.2 |
| 2. | discrimination | Name common actions | verbs | ing | 2 |
| 3. | concepts | Describe attributes | adjectives | more -ed | 3 |
| 4. | concepts | Give obtain information | copula | – | – |
| 5. | concepts | State possessions | pronouns | possess | 4 |
| 6. | concepts | identify other actions | pronouns | – | – |
| 7. | concepts | express time | adverbs | adverbs | 3 |
| 8. | rule | make requests | polite forms | – | – |
| 9. | rule | describe routines | 's marker | 3-SG-s | 5 |
| 10. | rule | state plans | future cont. | Aux -ing | 4 |
| 11. | rule | ask questions | wh-? form | – | – |
| 12. | rule | describe actions | pres. cont | – | – |
| 13. | rule | give directions | prepositions | prep. strand | 4 |
| 14. | rule | possessions - others | poss adjectv. | case 3rd | 4/5 |
| 15. | rule | express preferences | comparatives | -er -est | 5 |
| 16. | rule | make offers | modals polite | quest. tag. 2-sub comp | 6 |
| 17. | rule | probable actions | simple future | – | – |
| 18. | rule | describe complete action | simple past | – | – |
| 19. | problem solve | provide information | gerunds | gerund | 6 |
| 20. | problem solve | provide alternatives | conditionals | dat mvmt | 6 |

sroom observations and workshops with teachers identified 20 language tasks which could be ordered according to the three approaches and then validated using teacher judgment to rank them in the order in which they would be taught. The relationship among these approaches is presented in Table 1. In the revision of the ITESL, one item was removed and a further two were added, making 21 items in the revised form.

> 'Listening to the way in which teachers were intuitively assessing students provided an initial guide.'

At the base of the tasks were chaining recognition and formulaic tasks. In the Johnston scheme this is described as the *'use of single words or fomulaic approach to language'* or levels one or two. The discrimination of sounds and object separation, or one verb from another translates to *'using -ing sounds'* in the Johnston table at level 2. So it was possible to progress through the tasks from naming common objects and actions, describing attributes, giving information, stating possessions, identifying other actions and so on, to line each one up with an element of structure and then compare each one with the learning theory approach, the language development model of Johnston and Pienemann and the Higgs and Clifford contributory model. There was a quite good match between the levels of development in the generalized learning theory and the development progression. Where there is a dotted line in the table there was no obvious direct match.

There are a number of options available to the project. The context could have been fixed and made obligatory together with the eliciting language so that the only thing that would vary was the student's response. However, there was the problem that language is rarely completely right or completely wrong. Hence it was decided to use the Rasch Partial Credit Model (Masters, 1980). This is probabilistic and enabled a monitoring of attribute development. The model postulates that it is likely that a student can perform a language task at or near the level of ability but not if the task is well above that level. It is very likely that the student will adequately peform the task if it is well below the level of ability. The assumption is that the person's ability and the difficulty of the task can be simultaneously plotted on the same dimension. This is a dimension that it was possible to identify as common among the literature and practice of teachers.►

An analytic approach to identifying scoring criteria for the interview items was used. At first the scoring criteria for each item were structural, but this changed because of the way the scoring processes were validated. About 270 interviews were tape-recorded and a group of experienced teachers were asked to listen to these and to identify what it was that discriminated between different qualities of responses that the students gave. Their analyses of what distinguished the students from each other were taken to be the criteria for the items. They were scored on a three point scale 0, 1 and 2. A zero meant that the answer was the weakest of three types of responses. It did not mean that it was wrong. This has led to some problems, in fact, and the revised form of the test is now being scored using a scale of 1, 2 and 3. Teachers felt uncomfortable when required to give a score of 0 to an answer that is partly right!

> 'An analytical approach to identifying scoring criteria for the interview items was used.'

| Num | Name | Measure | Error |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21 | Tense manip | 3.57 | .23 |
| 20 | Past Pefct | 3.01 | .19 |
| 19 | First Condition | 2.00 | .13 |
| 18 | Gerunds | 1.65 | .12 |
| 17 | Simple Past | 1.53 | .12 |
| 16 | Simple-Futrs | 1.27 | .17 |
| 11 | Wh-Questns | 1.03 | .11 |
| 15 | Offers & Invites | .97 | .11 |
| 9 | Simple-Prst | .87 | .13 |
| 14 | Comparatives | .75 | .14 |
| 13 | Directions | .67 | .11 |
| 10 | Futures | .50 | .17 |
| 8 | Requests | .40 | .13 |
| 12 | Pres-Cntns | .24 | .11 |
| 5 | Possessives | .19 | .15 |
| 7 | Advrb-Time | .02 | .13 |
| 6 | Personal-Prns | −.10 | .15 |
| 4 | Verb-to-be | −.24 | .15 |
| 2 | Verbs | −.72 | .16 |
| 3 | Adjectives | −1.84 | .19 |
| 1 | Nouns | −1.99 | .20 |

**Table 2** Interview Item Focus, Relative Difficulty and Standard Error

The formulae provided a framework for constructing an item bank of test questions that had the same focus, but which might be applied in various contexts to incorporate different course content. They should not be seen as an attempt to define a set of syntactic or grammatical rules for the development of language. The formulae are couched in a form to ensure that only a restricted and specific range of language is used by the interviewer when developing items to test each objective. The symbols in the formulae are defined as follows:

< > Elements in angular brackets are replaced by a word or phrase. Often, restrictions on the possible inclusion are specified.

| | Elements listed in between straight lines are alternatives, *one of which must be used.*

[ ] Elements in square brackets are optional, i.e. they may be omitted.

Using the formulae as set out enables each objective to be tested by an item that is developed to suit the content required by the teacher. For example, the formulae for testing Objective 11 of the ITESL, Offers and Requests is set out in Figure 2.

Objective 11 could be tested using any of the following questions:

Lyn wants her friend to come to her home.
What does she ask her?

You want your friend to have a drink.
What do you ask him?

She wants to buy her friend a coffee.
What does she say?

Each of these examples tests the same objective, but they may or may not be suitable for testing achievement after a particular course. Provided the formulae and restrictions are followed it is possible to create interview test questions that are suitable for a wide range of possible contexts. Further, by strictly adhering to the formulaic approach, it is possible to avoid giving the appropriate response

**Figure 2** Sample Formulae for Testing Objective 11, Offers and Request, of ITESL

```
|<Pronoun>| want/s[<verb>] |<noun subject>| [<verb>]<modifier><noun>
|<noun>   |                |  <pronoun>   |

What |does|| <noun subject> ||say|[<pronoun>]?
     |  do||   <pronoun>    ||ask|
```

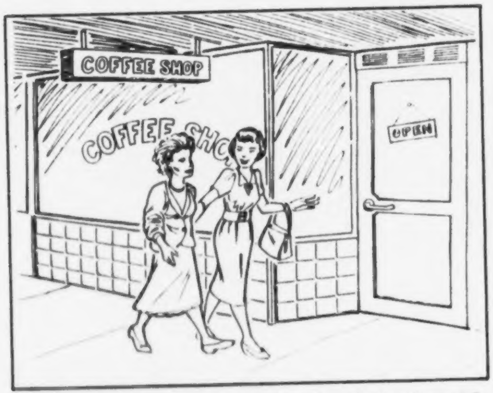


**Figure 3** Stimulus Material for Objective 11, Offers and Requests of ITESL

embedded in the stimulus and thereby eliciting an 'echo' response. Each objective has been designed to avoid both the echo and the verbal equivalent of the cloze test item.

The inteviewer constructing the item needs to select the *context* most appropriate to the instruction or placement, the structure (fixed in these objectives) and the function deemed appropriate. The content of each component of the formulae can be altered to suit a particular purpose. The examples given in the test manual, and tested in the accompanying test instrument, do not necessarily belong to a context or function specific to any group of students. Accordingly, it is appropriate for the teachers to design their own tests from these formulae when the aim is to monitor the achievement levels of their classes.

The example used to test this objective is shown in Figure 3. The interviewer used this stimulus with the prompt: 'She wants to buy her friend a coffee. What does she say?'

There are numerous contexts in which the student may be tested with this objective.

Social:

He wants to ask a girl to a party.
What does he say?
He wants to offer his friend a lift.
What does he say?
He wants to help his friend paint the house.
What does he say?

Work:

He wants to offer the man a job.
What does he say?

All of the objectives can be adapted in this manner. The context and the function can be altered for each of them to suit the purpose and content of a course. The task being asked of the student is to make an offer. But it is a restricted way of asking the student to do it. Note also that there are no specific determiners in the formula. That is, the response is not included in the question in order to avoid the student 'echoing' the interviewer's question.

Twenty-one of these formulae have now been developed, moving sequentially from *chaining* up as far as *problem-solving*. It was also possible to ensure that the difficulty of the items increased as the student moved from item 1 to item 21. Table 2 shows how the difficulty of the items varies and presents the margin of error associated with each item. The Rasch partial credit model gives the estimate of error for each item rather than the normal estimate of reliability.

The table shows that the item difficulty levels are very close and that progression from one item to

**Figure 4** Distribution of Interview Items and Students on the Same Continuum

| Logits | Persons | Items | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5.0 | | | |
| | XXXXXXXXX | | |
| 4.0 | | | |
| | | Tense Manip | |
| | XXXXXX | | |
| | XX | | |
| 3.0 | | Pres Perfct | |
| | XX | | |
| | XXXX | | |
| | XXX | | |
| 2.0 | XXXX | First Condition | |
| | XX | | |
| | XXXXXXX | Simple Past | Gerunds |
| | XXXXXXXXXXX | | |
| | XXX | Simple-Futrs | |
| 1.0 | XXXXX | Wh-Questns | Offers & Invites |
| | XXXXXX | Simple-Prst | Comparatives |
| | XXXXXXXXXXXXXX | Directions | |
| | XXXXXXXXX | Requests | Futures |
| | XXXXXXXXXXXX | Possessives | Pres-Cntns |
| .0 | XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX | Advrb-Time | |
| | XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX | Verb-to-be | Personal-Prns |
| | XXXXXXXXXXXXXX | | |
| | XXXXX | | |
| | XXXXXXXXXXXXX | Verbs | |
| −1.0 | XXXXX | | |
| | XXXXX | | |
| | XXXXX | | |
| | XXXX | | |
| | XXXXXXXX | Adjectives | |
| −2.0 | XXXXXX | Nouns | |
| | X | | |
| | X | | |
| | XXXX | | |
| | XX | | |
| −3.0 | X | | |
| | X | | |
| −4.0 | | | |

Each 'X' in the person column is 2 persons the next in the test may be problematic. In fact, it is possible for students to develop their own idiosyncratic path through the items. The distribution of items as illustrated in Figure 4 shows that some items can be located at or about the same place on the underlying dimension.

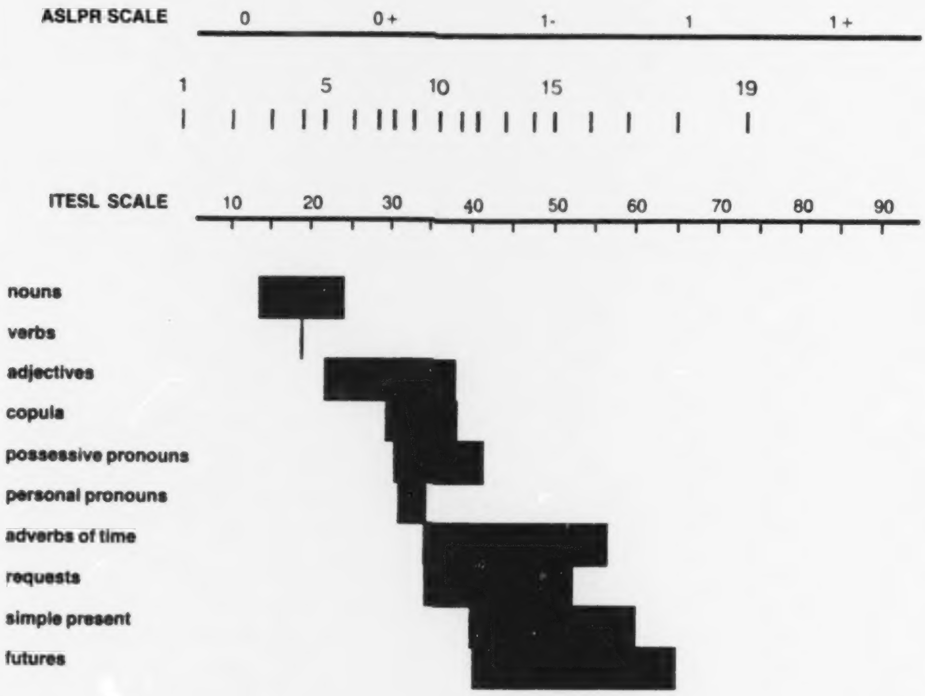
> Teachers felt uncomfortable when required to give a score of 0 to an answer that is partly right.

The test provides both magnitude and direction of language task development along a measurable dimension of language and the progression of language tasks provides independent evidence of the student's placement along the dimension. This enables the teacher to obtain an estimate of the student's ability. Thus the test can be used to monitor the student's development in the early stages of language acquisition. Figure 5 below shows how the group of students interviewed with the test relate to the items in the revised ITESL.

The test's use as a diagnostic tool was also explored by mapping the responses, using the partial credit model. There are regions of most likely response. If a score of 12, for example, was obtained on the first test and a line was drawn through the figure below at that score, we can see that the line runs above the shaded area for 'nouns', 'verbs', 'adjectives' and the 'copula'. It runs through the shaded area for possessive pronouns and above that of personal pronouns. The shaded region is the region of highest probability

> Provided the formulae and restrictions are followed it is possible to create interview test questions that are suitable for a wide range of possible contexts.

**Figure 5** Diagnostic Chart for Sub-test 1 of ITESL



for a score of 1. Above the region the probability is highest for a score of 2. Below it the probability is highest for a score of 0 given that total score of 12. If the student's response was such that the score was much lower than expected, given the overall total, some exploration of reasons would be worthwhile in order to check if there is need for remediation. If the score is low, but as expected, the teacher has information for instructional purposes. If the score is lower than expected, the teacher may have identified an area in which remediation is required. Further investigation would be warranted. We believe, therefore, that tests based on these approaches have the potential to provide both placement and diagnostic information.

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# Trends and Factors in Language Shift in Australia

by ***Michael Clyne*** *and* ***Stephanie Jaehrling***

A recent article in Vox (Clyne 1988a) reported on some aspects of the language situation in Australia based on the 1986 Census data. A comparison of this data with 1976 Census statistics indicated increased use of some languages (eg Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, Vietnamese) due to new immigration and increased reporting of the use of other languages (eg Macedonian, Maltese) presumably because of renewed language loyalty. The comparison also indicated a reduction in the reported use of some languages (notably German, French and Italian, but also Dutch and, taking into account the recent influx of migrants, Polish). Part of this decrease can be attributed to the change in the wording of the language question from 'languages regularly used' to 'home language(s)'. In the groups concerned, there are now many adults who use only English in their own homes and the community language in their parents' homes. The previous paper also referred to the clustering of the 'new' languages in New South Wales and the continued concentration of most of the more established community languages in Victoria.

In this paper we shall employ cross-tabulations between first and second generation home language use and place of residence (state), sex, period of residence and age to analyse and explain trends in the past decade in language maintenance and language shift.

The 1976 Census revealed a remarkably consistent rank ordering of ethnolinguistic groups regarding language retention, with Greek-Australians showing the greatest language maintenance rate; Dutch-Australians the highest language shift to English only; and people of Italian, Yugoslav, Polish, German and Maltese backgrounds taking intermediate positions in that order. This pattern was almost completely consistent in every state and territory of Australia, with minor variations in the

**Table 1.** Language Shift in First Generation (percentages)

| Birthplace | NSW | VIC | QLD | WA | SA | TAS | NT | ACT | Total Australia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AUSTRIA | 39.9 | 37.2 | 43.1 | 42.0 | 38.2 | 45.5 | 45.7 | 41.1 | 39.5 |
| FRANCE | 27.1 | 29.3 | 25.3 | 27.4 | 28.2 | 32.9 | 23.2 | 30.2 | 27.5 |
| GERMANY | 41.1 | 39.5 | 42.3 | 43.8 | 37.8 | 43.3 | 48.5 | 44.4 | 40.8 |
| GREECE | 4.8 | 3.6 | 9.3 | 7.8 | 4.2 | 4.9 | 5.4 | 6.1 | 4.4 |
| HUNGARY | 24.1 | 21.6 | 30.9 | 28.3 | 23.3 | 42.4 | 40.5 | 28.3 | 24.4 |
| ITALY | 11.0 | 8.9 | 15.9 | 11.1 | 9.8 | 23.2 | 19.2 | 15.6 | 10.5 |
| LEBANON | 4.4 | 5.4 | 20.8 | 19.5 | 10.2 | 14.7 | 21.1 | 14.7 | 5.2 |
| MALTA | 25.6 | 22.2 | 44.1 | 55.3 | 35.0 | 74.4 | 68.2 | 46.5 | 26.0 |
| NETHERLANDS | 49.0 | 48.9 | 48.8 | 45.0 | 47.4 | 46.7 | 59.6 | 51.2 | 48.4 |
| POLAND | 16.7 | 16.3 | 20.4 | 39.8 | 12.8 | 16.9 | 30.4 | 14.8 | 16.0 |
| SOUTH AMERICA | 8.2 | 8.4 | 26.7 | 19.5 | 22.5 | 34.8 | 18.4 | 14.8 | 10.1 |
| SPAIN | 11.4 | 13.0 | 13.4 | 17.6 | 20.1 | 35.7 | 12.6 | 11.9 | 13.1 |
| TURKEY | 4.1 | 3.3 | 18.5 | 9.3 | 9.5 | 26.1 | 29.2 | 15.3 | 4.2 |
| VIETNAM | 2.8 | 2.5 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.3 | 10.8 | 5.2 | 5.8 | 3.0 |
| YUGOSLAVIA | 7.9 | 8.6 | 17.8 | 11.7 | 13.9 | 25.1 | 33.1 | 10.4 | 9.5 |

Source: Based on cross-tabulation 'Home Language — English Only — by Birthplace ABS, Census of Australia 1986
Note: South American here covers only the Spanish-speaking countries of South America 'Yugoslav-born' includes speakers of a number of languages. Vietnam-born covers both Chinese and Vietnamese speakers

first generation; and in the second generation from exogamous marriages and endogamous marriages (Clyne 1982:34,44). The variables that appeared to be of unequivocal significance in language shift were: cultural similarity to the dominant cultural group, a relatively minor role of language in the respective cultural value system (cf. Smolicz 1979, 1981), exogamy, gender (masculinity) and age.

The 1986 Census data was cross-tabulated in such a way that facilitates comparisons between a larger number of first generation (but unfortunately not more second generation) groups.

## First generation language shift

People born in Vietnam (whether Chinese or Vietnamese speakers), Turkey, Greece and Lebanon have the lowest language shift (see Table 1). The shift among the Yugoslav-born (9.5) is the same as in 1976 and is now lower than that for the Italian-born, which has risen from 6.3 to 10.5. The decrease in language shift among the Polish-born (from 20.2 to 16.0) may be attributed to the recent arrivals.

All other groups for which there is comparative data show at least some increase in language shift since 1976. French and Hungarians, for whom we did not have cross-tabulations in 1976, form a group of 'moderate language shifters' together with the Maltese-born to whose ethnolinguistic revival Clyne (1988a) referred. The substantial increase in German language shift and the continuing rise in that of the Dutch accounts for the decrease in the reported use of German and Dutch respectively.

The 1976 data seemed to suggest (Clyne 1982:36–39) that there was a fairly uniform ranking of states as to relative language shift which applied to most of the groups. South Australia tended to show the lowest language shifts, followed by Victoria and then NSW. By 1986, the lowest shift rates for Greeks and Italians were no longer in South Australia but in Victoria; that for Dutch was no longer in South Australia but in Tasmania; and the French, Hungarians and Lebanese maintained their first language in the home more in New South Wales than either South Australia or Victoria.

The highest language shifts tend to be in the same states and territories as in 1976, but the Northern Territory has displaced Queensland as the unit with the highest shift from German, whereas for Greeks the highest shift is now in Queensland, not in Tasmania.

## Second generation language shift

As in 1976, language shift is greater in the second generation than in the first in all the groups. The difference is least between the Greek-born and their children. The rank ordering of language maintenance by ethnolinguistic group in the second generation where both parents were born in the same country is identical to that of the first generation, namely (from lowest to highest shift) Australians of Greek, Yugoslav, Italian, Maltese,

**Table 2.** Language Shift in Second Generation of Endogamous Marriages (percentages)

| Birthplace of Parents | NSW | VIC | QLD | WA | SA | TAS | NT | ACT | Total Australia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GERMANY | 72.5 | 70.0 | 82.7 | 72.2 | 57.6 | 75.8 | 75.1 | 69.8 | 73.1 |
| GREECE | 9.1 | 7.0 | 20.1 | 22.1 | 8.3 | 5.3 | 8.3 | 12.4 | 8.7 |
| ITALY | 30.2 | 24.4 | 43.9 | 36.4 | 27.6 | 43.0 | 42.9 | 38.2 | 29.3 |
| MALTA | 62.0 | 53.1 | 72.6 | 73.1 | 70.3 | 84.0 | 88.9 | 74.1 | 58.8 |
| NETHERLANDS | 85.8 | 86.5 | 85.7 | 82.3 | 84.6 | 84.1 | 83.5 | 85.9 | 85.4 |
| YUGOSLAVIA | 15.0 | 15.0 | 30.5 | 32.1 | 25.1 | 36.5 | 42.5 | 16.0 | 18.0 |

Source: Based on cross-tabulation 'Home Language – English Only – by Birthplace of Parents'. ABS. Census of Australia 1986
Note: Cross-tabulations with language were available only for these second generation groups

and Dutch parentage. Apart from those whose parents were born in Greece, all the groups have increased their language shift since 1976, something that most probably reflects the change in the question. The decrease in Greek language shift should be seen in terms of an ethnic revival (Fishman et al 1985, Clyne 1988) and an indication of ethnolinguistic vitality (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977).

Apart from the Dutch, all ethnolinguistic groups recorded their lowest language shift in the first and second generation in the same state.

Table 3 shows that Greek alone has more than a 50% chance of being maintained in, or as a result of being raised in, an 'ethnolinguistically mixed' household. Apart from a transposition of German and Maltese, the rank ordering of language shift is the same as for the first generation and for the second generation resulting from endogamous marriages.

## Language shift and regional population distribution

The fairly uniform ranking in 1976 of state language shift rates across ethnolinguistic groups does not occur in 1986. It is in the state where a group is relatively numerically strongest that its language shift is lowest. So the Lebanese and Spanish/South Americans have their lowest shift in NSW; the Greeks, Italians and Maltese in Victoria; and the Germans, Austrians and Polish-born in South Australia. Conversely, the highest shift away from Italian, Maltese and Spanish is in Tasmania where their speakers are least concentrated. The same applies to Greeks in Queensland.

## Language shift and gender

The tendency in 1976 for females to maintain their community language more than males (Clyne 1982:42) has become far more marked (Table 4). The particularly large increase in the male:female difference among Italians and Greeks may be related to the change in the question, since the data seems to suggest that the fathers are providing the model of English for the children. Hungarians, Dutch and Germans show the greatest gender differences in language shift and Greeks the least. This may reflect patterns of out-marriage. (Greeks show the lowest out-marriage rate and Dutch and Germans the highest). Gender difference, however, has little impact on general language shift patterns, as shown by the Hungarian and French-born. The two groups vary substantially in gender differences (because of their different migration patterns), but show approximately the same language shift rate.

It should be noted that the more recently arrived groups (Lebanese, Turks, South Americans) record most of the lowest gender differences, while older

**Table 3.** Language Shift in Second Generation of Endogamous Marriages (percentages)

| Birthplace of Parents | NSW | VIC | QLD | WA | SA | TAS | NT | ACT | Total Australia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GERMANY | 83.8 | 84.6 | 89.4 | 86.9 | 84.9 | 86.6 | 87.8 | 83.7 | 85.4 |
| GREECE | 35.7 | 41.2 | 56.0 | 54.1 | 39.8 | 59.7 | 40.5 | 49.7 | 41.3 |
| ITALY | 66.1 | 68.7 | 80.2 | 76.3 | 70.8 | 88.8 | 81.0 | 79.8 | 70.8 |
| MALTA | 84.1 | 86.4 | 93.7 | 91.7 | 89.2 | 94.2 | 91.1 | 93.4 | 86.6 |
| NETHERLANDS | 93.1 | 91.5 | 91.0 | 91.8 | 92.1 | 93.5 | 90.6 | 90.3 | 92.0 |
| YUGOSLAVIA | 57.8 | 63.5 | 78.4 | 71.1 | 69.1 | 84.2 | 87.9 | 69.3 | 65.0 |

Source: Based on cross-tabulation 'Home Language – English Only – by Birthplace of Parents'. ABS. Census of Australia 1986 established communities, especially from Northern and Central Europe have the highest (probably as a result of marriage patterns and assimilationist tendencies). The unusual statistics for Filipinos is probably due to the large number of Philippines-born women married to Anglo-Australians.

Taking into account the variation between the 1976 and 1986 Census data on this point, it may be that gender differences in language maintenance become greater with increased time of residence in Australia.

All the second generation groups have experienced a greater language maintenance rate among females than among males.

## Language shift and period of residence

The widespread non-response to the period of residence question in the 1976 Census made cross-tabulation pointless. In 1986, such cross-tabulation offered additional information. In addition to assessing the number of years in Australia after which a switch from a particular language to English as the sole home language is most likely to occur, it also indicated the importance of belonging to a particular sub-group which migrated at a particular time ('vintage' cf. Kunz 1969) or of having lived through a specific period of Australia's history.

Several groups subdivide into a number of vintages. For instance, most of the Czech-born migrated in 1938–39, in 1947–49, or in 1968, although there were, of course, some who came at other times. The Hungarian-born also fall into three main groups, 1938–39, 1947–49, and 1956–57, again with some migrating later. There has been a continuous migration of Germans and Austrians since the early 1950's, but the largest sub-group came in the early to mid-1950's. The most recent sub-group have, on the whole, a higher socioeconomic status and educational level than their predecessors. The other significant sub-group as with Czechs and Hungarians were the refugees from National Socialism (or Fascism). Members of the sub-group generally had Jewish connections although by no means all were practising Jews or even identified Jews. For Greeks too, the Second World War marked the boundary between vintages. Another landmark is 1967, when refugees from the military dictatorship joined the economic migrants of the 1950's and early to mid-60's.

**Table 4.** First Generation Language Shift to English Only by Sex

| Birthplace | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|
| AUSTRIA | 43.8 | 35.2 |
| FRANCE | 28.4 | 24.9 |
| GERMANY | 44.7 | 36.8 |
| GREECE | 5.5 | 3.3 |
| HUNGARY | 29.7 | 16.3 |
| ITALY | 13.3 | 7.2 |
| LEBANON | 6.0 | 4.3 |
| MALTA | 28.4 | 23.3 |
| NETHERLANDS | 53.1 | 42.9 |
| PHILIPPINES | 18.2 | 25.4 |
| POLAND | 19.8 | 11.7 |
| SOUTH AMERICA | 11.3 | 9.3 |
| SPAIN | 14.2 | 11.6 |
| TURKEY | 4.1 | 2.8 |
| YUGOSLAVIA | 11.9 | 6.7 |

Source Based on cross-tabulation Home Language — English Only — by Birthplace — by Sex, ABS Census of Australia 1986

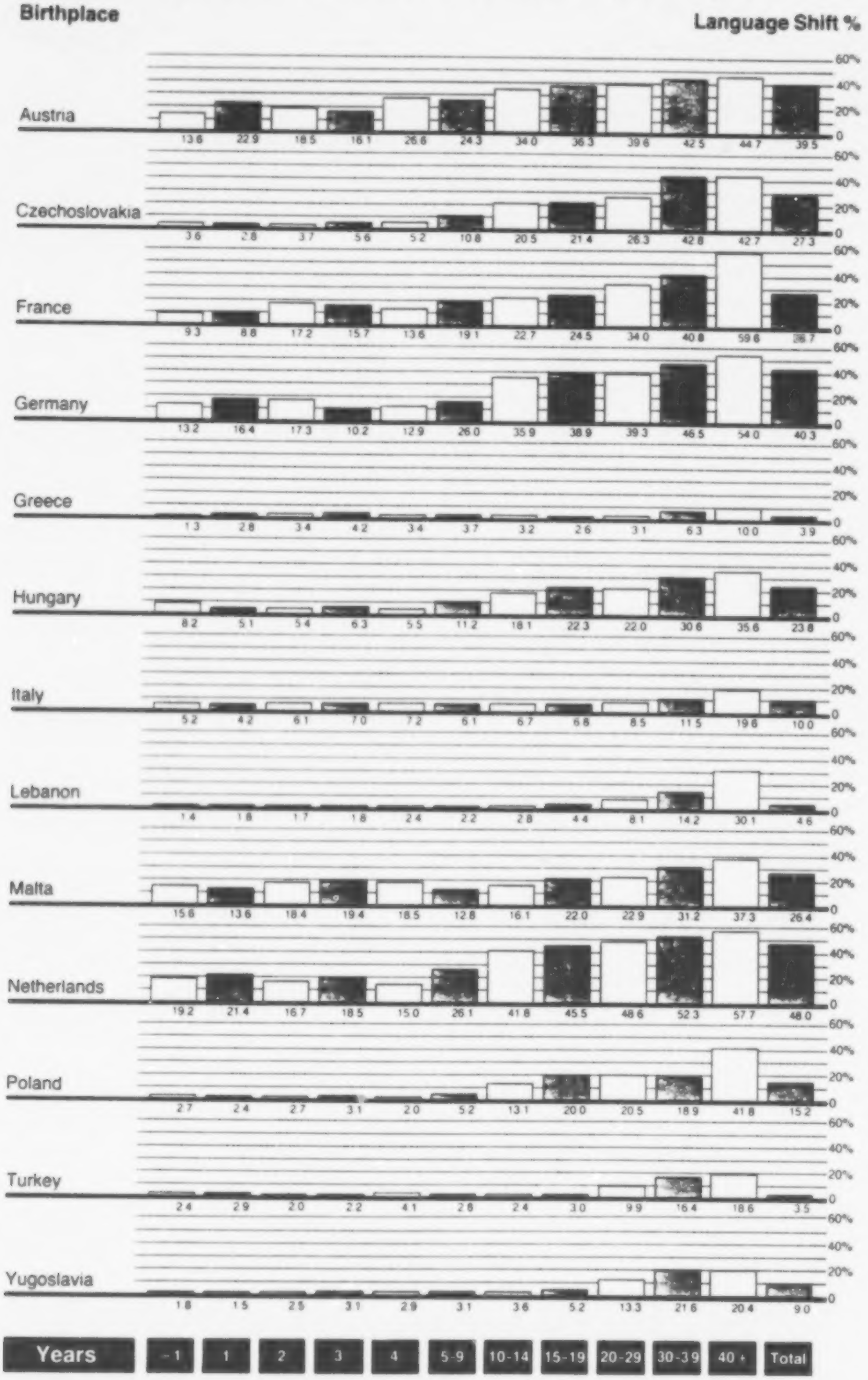
The Yugoslav-born are so diverse as a category (Croats, Serbs, Macedonians, Slovenians, Hungarians, Albanians, Slovaks, and others) that it is of virtually no sociolinguistic value. However, the division between the 'displaced persons' of the late 1940's and the economic migrants of the 1960's and 70's is still of significance. Before the Second World War, virtually all the Polish-born in Australia were Jewish. Some had come in the 1920's; others immediately before the War. The most important postwar vintages were the Catholic 'displaced persons' and the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust (late 1940's) and the migrants of the past 10–15 years.

On the whole, the data indicates that language shift tends to increase with a longer period of residence in Australia (see Figure 1). That this is not always the case is borne out by remarkably high rates of 'English only' use among very recently arrived single migrants presumably due to their housing or marital situation.

There are clear cut-off points in the way period of residence affects language shifts:

- After four or five years in Australia, probably due to pressure from the children (Austrians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Dutch, but not Southern Europeans, Turks or Lebanese).
- After ten years, in some cases marking the beginning of a new vintage (a new group of Poles, with additional opportunities for networking and language maintenance and a new group of more affluent and/or educated Germans, Austrians and Dutch, able to utilise improved means of communication with Europe — ►

**Figure 1** Language Shift by Period of Residence (percentages)



Source: Based on Cross tabulation 'Home Language — English only — by Period of Residence', ABS, Census of Australia frequent trips to the country of origin, visits from overseas relatives, videos and publications from overseas). This periodisation probably also reflects the changed policies and attitudes in Australia and the initiatives in education, the media and libraries. Those groups affected particularly by this are those which normally show moderately high to high language shift (thus not Greeks, Italians and 'Yugoslavs' whose shift patterns are more uniform).

- After 20–29 years — marking a new vintage in the case of the post-1956 Hungarian refugees only.
- After 30–39 years (ie those who migrated between 1946 and 1956), simply the result of longer period of residence and of assimilationist pressures at the time of migration.
- After 40 + years (ie prewar migrants), where a reaction against political and/or racial oppression in the country of origin together with wartime xenophobia in Australia led to language shift in some families. This applies to Germans, Czechs and, to a lesser extent, to Hungarians but not to Austrians. Among the latter, the language shift for prewar refugees is only marginally higher than that for the economic migrants of the 1950's. Some Austrians, by propagating their own national variety of German, distance themselves from the German variety of the aggressor and invader. (The myth of Austria as the victim of Nazi Germany has become a dominant feature of Austrian postwar foreign policy.) Language maintenance reflected the importance of some of the refugees' belief in themselves as bearers of European culture in exile (Clyne 1981:22). This attitude was especially strong among immediate postwar Polish 'displaced persons' and is the key factor distinguishing their relatively low shift from that of the prewar Polish-born. They have long integrated into a predominantly English-medium Australian-Jewish community whose symbolic ethnic language has since become Hebrew (Klarberg 1983, Kouzmin 1988, Clyne 1988:74).

While the post-1956 Hungarian refugees have shifted less than their compatriots who arrived in 1947–49, this was not the case among the refugees from Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Period of residence and vintage affect different groups to varying degrees. Language shift does not increase greatly among Greeks. Italians are affected more, but Czechs, Poles, Dutch and Lebanese are groups for which language shift rises substantially with time.

## Language shift by age in the first generation

We must also take into account the tensions between the factors 'age' and 'period of residence'. In 1976, most of the groups studied experienced their lowest language shift among the over-fifties, the second lowest in the 30–49 age group, and the highest language shift in the 20–29 age groups (Clyne 1982:42). In 1986, it is still the case that the oldest age group maintains the community language most in the home (despite comparisons being difficult). The exceptions are due to the interface of age, vintage and period of residence (eg Greeks, Poles) and the number of elderly people who came to Australia as single young males and out-married (eg Lebanese, Turks, Yugoslavs).

The highest language shift for nearly all the birthplace groups is among the 25–34 year olds with a shift almost as high in the 35–44 group among Austrian-, German-, and Dutch-born. The 35–44 age group experiences the highest shift among those born in Poland or Yugoslavia. A feature of the 1986 data is the very low shift among the children of new migrants from Poland and Yugoslavia. The low language shift in the elderly and the higher language shift in the young are probably due to a combination of factors:

**Table 5.** Comparison of First Generation Language Shift in the Younger Age Groups, 1976 and 1986

| Birthplace | 1976<br>5–9 | <br>10–14 | 1986<br>5–9 | <br>10–14 | <br>15–24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GERMANY | 35.1 | 35.5 | 24.8 | 30.4 | 40.9 |
| GREECE | 5.1 | 5.5 | 10.3 | 8.2 | 5.8 |
| ITALY | 11.7 | 9.4 | 18.6 | 12.2 | 11.5 |
| MALTA | 39.6 | 40.4 | 31.8 | 25.6 | 32.4 |
| NETHERLANDS | 47.7 | 44.1 | 39.3 | 31.5 | 43.2 |
| POLAND | 18.7 | 12.9 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 6.5 |
| YUGOSLAVIA | 11.6 | 11.1 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 8.0 |

Source: ABS, Census of Australia 1976 and 1986

**Table 6.** Language Shift by Age — Second Generation

| Birthplace of Parents | 0–4 | 5–14 | 15–24 | 25–34 | 35–44 | 45-54 | 55–64 | 65 + | Total Australia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GERMANY | 44.3 | 68.0 | 67.8 | 76.4 | 86.4 | 92.0 | 93.2 | 95.8 | 73.0 |
| GREECE | 10.9 | 4.8 | 5.1 | 19.0 | 34.4 | 34.8 | 38.3 | 41.6 | 8.7 |
| ITALY | 33.1 | 27.0 | 20.3 | 36.7 | 50.0 | 51.3 | 62.3 | 73.6 | 29.3 |
| MALTA | 51.2 | 58.1 | 56.8 | 63.7 | 67.1 | 68.6 | 70.8 | 77.6 | 58.8 |
| NETHERLANDS | 69.2 | 90.5 | 84.4 | 85.6 | 84.1 | 83.8 | 86.9 | 92.6 | 85.3 |
| YUGOSLAVIA | 11.4 | 9.1 | 20.5 | 50.3 | 58.8 | 55.7 | 62.4 | 58.7 | 18.0 |

Source: Based on cross-tabulation 'Home Language – English Only – by Birthplace of Parents', ABS, Census of Australia 1986

Schumann (1978) and others have argued that younger people acquire additional languages better than older people, and that they tend to be socially more flexible and motivated. Regardless of what they may speak to their parents, children tend to speak English to their brothers and sisters and to their peer group (see Clyne 1982:27), so that even those who marry within their ethnic group are likely to use English as the language of their nuclear family. Nuclear families are established generally by people in the 25–34 age group. The home language shift is often increased or completed when the children start school or secondary school, by which time the parents may be in the 35–44 age group. Older people, on the other hand, revert to their first language and lose (some of) their competence in subsequently acquired languages (see Clyne 1982:59).

Comparing the younger generation language shift rates (ie for the 15–24 year olds, those who would or might still be living in the family home) with those of the same cohorts in 1976 (5–14 year olds), we find an actual decrease in 1986 among the Dutch, Maltese, 'Yugoslavs' and Poles, and an increase among Greeks, Italians (whose shift rates are traditionally relatively low anyway) and Germans. This gives us an indication that some of the ethnolinguistic groups which had previously experienced medium to high language shifts (especially the more recently arrived families) may be responding to the more pluralistic atmosphere in Australia.

## Language shift and age in the second generation from endogamous marriages

As was the case in 1976 (Clyne 1982:48), the oldest age groups are the ones most likely to shift to the use of English only because community languages are generally spoken to people older than oneself. Another major factor is the Anglo-conformist attitudes during and after the two world wars. With the exception of the Dutch-Australians, whose language shift is already exceptionally high among children, all groups experience a sharp rise in the shift rate in the 25–34 age group (marriage and the birth of the first child), and among the German- and Italian-Australians in particular there is another sharp increase in the 35–44 age group.

Unfortunately, second generation data is available only for these few ethnolinguistic groups. However, of these, Greek-Australians now stand out as the group with an unusual ethnolinguistic vitality and motivation to maintain their community language. This is borne out by a comparison of first and second generation home language use. Among the 0–24 year olds the second generation show a lower language shift than the first generation.

## Designations of 'Serbo-Croatian'

Varieties may be termed languages either because of their distance from other languages or because they have been elaborated to absorb the functions of standard (national) languages (Kloss 1978). 'Serbo-Croatian' is in the grey area between a pluricentric language — one with a number of different varieties — and two elaborated and separating languages, Croatian and Serbian. There have been diverging policies on this in Yugoslavia itself (Ivić 1989, Franolić 1988). As ethnicity and language are inextricably linked, the claim for the autonomous existence of Croatian is naturally made more strongly in our multicultural society. The 1986 Census data actually shows that 55.4% of speakers of the national language of Yugoslavia call their language either 'Yugoslav' or 'Serbo-Croatian' and 44.5% designate it as either 'Croatian' or 'Serbian'. The claimants of the one pluricentric language outnumber the others in all states and territories except the ACT (27.3%) and Tasmania (48.2%). The 'Serbo-Croatian'/Yugoslav/speakers are 55% of the total in NSW, 54% in Victoria, 73% in Queensland, 54% in South Australia, 71% in WA, and 70% in the Northern Territory. There appears thus to be strong evidence

**Table 7.** Age Breakdown of Selected Community Languages

| | 0–4 | 5–9 | 10–14 | 15–24 | 25–34 | 35–44 | 45–54 | 55–64 | 65 · | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **ARABIC/LEBANESE** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 9797 | 11325 | 9582 | 15024 | 14753 | 12023 | 7098 | 4193 | 2264 | 86059 |
| Melbourne | 2504 | 3108 | 2588 | 4070 | 4288 | 3495 | 1950 | 1196 | 729 | 23928 |
| Adelaide | 209 | 247 | 207 | 367 | 414 | 341 | 204 | 171 | 90 | 2250 |
| Perth | 146 | 152 | 100 | 193 | 242 | 226 | 123 | 86 | 44 | 1312 |
| | **CHINESE** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 3819 | 4538 | 5032 | 11236 | 13430 | 10564 | 5127 | 3855 | 3781 | 61382 |
| Melbourne | 2303 | 2873 | 2979 | 8566 | 8353 | 6222 | 2857 | 2013 | 1894 | 38060 |
| Adelaide | 349 | 406 | 470 | 1344 | 1098 | 937 | 357 | 296 | 246 | 5503 |
| Perth | 558 | 753 | 815 | 2079 | 1950 | 1821 | 915 | 527 | 451 | 9869 |
| | **DUTCH** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 120 | 188 | 258 | 991 | 1377 | 1835 | 1883 | 2237 | 2031 | 10920 |
| Melbourne | 136 | 173 | 297 | 1224 | 1586 | 2045 | 2396 | 2556 | 2130 | 12543 |
| Adelaide | 49 | 91 | 109 | 396 | 637 | 958 | 842 | 1028 | 1041 | 5151 |
| Perth | 99 | 141 | 217 | 841 | 846 | 1172 | 1086 | 1307 | 1350 | 6868 |
| | **FRENCH** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 465 | 634 | 985 | 2386 | 3314 | 3480 | 2072 | 1836 | 1854 | 17026 |
| Melbourne | 332 | 405 | 812 | 2145 | 2455 | 2519 | 1782 | 1424 | 1344 | 13218 |
| Adelaide | 58 | 76 | 187 | 457 | 401 | 420 | 285 | 270 | 239 | 2393 |
| Perth | 121 | 178 | 337 | 763 | 928 | 854 | 530 | 429 | 344 | 4484 |
| | **GERMAN** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 486 | 535 | 900 | 2709 | 3174 | 4331 | 4741 | 4363 | 3567 | 24806 |
| Melbourne | 350 | 623 | 825 | 2858 | 2969 | 3717 | 5575 | 5241 | 3927 | 26085 |
| Adelaide | 137 | 222 | 442 | 1342 | 1353 | 1434 | 2009 | 2904 | 1814 | 11657 |
| Perth | 146 | 231 | 279 | 818 | 954 | 1330 | 1036 | 1089 | 654 | 6537 |
| | **GREEK** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 3495 | 5757 | 8725 | 19497 | 10714 | 13807 | 14880 | 8045 | 4285 | 89205 |
| Melbourne | 4406 | 7656 | 12146 | 29024 | 14528 | 19400 | 21313 | 10654 | 4782 | 123909 |
| Adelaide | 932 | 1340 | 2010 | 5998 | 3751 | 3252 | 4139 | 2580 | 1366 | 25368 |
| Perth | 209 | 316 | 407 | 905 | 772 | 753 | 906 | 664 | 577 | 5509 |

| | 0–4 | 5–9 | 10–14 | 15–24 | 25–34 | 35–44 | 45–54 | 55–64 | 65 · | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **ITALIAN** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 2832 | 4348 | 6689 | 17578 | 12542 | 12410 | 15516 | 12634 | 8057 | 92606 |
| Melbourne | 4331 | 7376 | 11846 | 32982 | 21575 | 20299 | 25755 | 21191 | 13150 | 158505 |
| Adelaide | 1052 | 1824 | 3054 | 9641 | 6371 | 5459 | 7511 | 6178 | 3748 | 44838 |
| Perth | 810 | 1399 | 2503 | 7324 | 5627 | 5134 | 6091 | 5573 | 3991 | 38452 |
| | **MALTESE** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 591 | 950 | 1204 | 2941 | 3785 | 4921 | 3664 | 2546 | 1827 | 22429 |
| Melbourne | 969 | 1529 | 1892 | 4387 | 5030 | 6229 | 4602 | 2902 | 1811 | 29351 |
| Adelaide | 24 | 44 | 82 | 201 | 251 | 362 | 321 | 279 | 191 | 1755 |
| Perth | 10 | 14 | 20 | 70 | 102 | 126 | 119 | 83 | 48 | 592 |
| | **POLISH** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 646 | 826 | 728 | 1150 | 3237 | 3026 | 1167 | 3031 | 2915 | 16726 |
| Melbourne | 730 | 907 | 874 | 1588 | 3369 | 3363 | 1602 | 3788 | 3609 | 19830 |
| Adelaide | 342 | 390 | 353 | 656 | 1459 | 1295 | 569 | 1850 | 1490 | 8404 |
| Perth | 296 | 324 | 251 | 419 | 1299 | 964 | 437 | 1003 | 788 | 5781 |
| | **SERBO-CROATIAN/CROATION/SERBIAN/YUGOSLAV** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 2208 | 3336 | 4831 | 7806 | 6262 | 8734 | 8282 | 3546 | 1880 | 46885 |
| Melbourne | 1801 | 2932 | 3928 | 7584 | 5772 | 7761 | 7724 | 3169 | 1486 | 42157 |
| Adelaide | 280 | 409 | 579 | 1244 | 1014 | 1158 | 1356 | 862 | 586 | 7488 |
| Perth | 338 | 604 | 848 | 1482 | 1236 | 1728 | 1705 | 1031 | 1061 | 10033 |
| | **SPANISH** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 2073 | 3266 | 3896 | 6538 | 5754 | 8650 | 4695 | 2063 | 1100 | 38035 |
| Melbourne | 932 | 1497 | 1929 | 3381 | 2577 | 3637 | 1970 | 865 | 451 | 17239 |
| Adelaide | 97 | 145 | 153 | 322 | 308 | 302 | 209 | 140 | 68 | 1744 |
| Perth | 148 | 235 | 272 | 511 | 509 | 544 | 317 | 161 | 71 | 2768 |
| | **VIETNAMESE** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sydney | 2261 | 2372 | 2295 | 5330 | 7085 | 2823 | 1063 | 592 | 359 | 23980 |
| Melbourne | 2031 | 2294 | 2061 | 4597 | 6338 | 2366 | 795 | 521 | 314 | 21317 |
| Adelaide | 703 | 719 | 586 | 1264 | 1684 | 627 | 187 | 100 | 73 | 6015 |
| Perth | 485 | 497 | 527 | 1090 | 1305 | 525 | 176 | 88 | 65 | 4758 |

in favour of the point of view that Australians of 'Yugoslav' background should be able to decide themselves how their language should be designated, whether 'Serbo-Croatian' or 'Serbian' or 'Croatian'.

## Age breakdown of selected community languages

Table 7, showing the age breakdown of home users of twelve community languages, may be of interest to planners in areas such as education and care of the elderly. In particular, it indicates:

- the emerging importance of Arabic as a home language among school age children in Sydney and, to a lesser extent, in Melbourne;
- the declining importance of German among school age children;
- the greater significance of Greek than of Italian in this age group in both Sydney and Melbourne.

Conversely, in the 55-plus age group:

- Italian predominates in all the major centres under consideration;
- German remains in second or third position, especially among the 55–64 year olds;
- there will be a presence of elderly Greek, Dutch and Polish speakers for some time to come;
- Sydney is distinguished by a fairly large group of elderly Chinese and Arabic speakers.

## Summary

The 1986 Census data indicates the unequivocal significance of demographic variables in language shift — ethnolinguistic distribution, sex, and marriage patterns. Age is not so clearcut a factor. The oldest groups shift most in the second generation and in the first generation use the community language in the home most. The 25–34 year olds tend to shift most or initiate a sharp language shift. Language maintenance or shift among the very young must be examined in relation with period of residence and/or vintage.

Cultural distance (including religion) continues to be an important variable. Western European cultures (German, Dutch) akin to Anglo-Australian seem to prompt language shift. There is an intermediate group, including the British-influenced Maltese, the French and Hungarian, and the Polish and Italian, with medium rates of language shift. The lowest language shifts in the ethnolinguistic groups under consideration are among the Mediterranean peoples who are either Muslims or Eastern Orthodox/Eastern rite Catholics — Greeks, Turks and Lebanese. The 'Yugoslavs', being partly Central European and partly Southern European ethnic groups, some Catholics, some Orthodox, are between the groups with high and moderate shifts.

In brief, Northern and Central Europeans shift more than Southern Europeans, and Western Europeans more than Eastern Europeans. The role of language as a core value in the respective culture (Smolicz 1981) may contribute to an explanation of why Greek and Dutch speakers so frequently find themselves at opposite ends of the language maintenance — shift continuum. Fluctuations between the 1976 and 1986 data for particular groups (eg Maltese, Macedonian, German, Italian) and variation in language shift rates of specific subgroups/vintages (see also Clyne 1988b) would suggest that this may need to be seen in relation to ethnolinguistic vitality (Giles et al 1977) and the policies and attitudes of Australian society. Period of residence is also a complex factor insofar as it is

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intricately linked with vintage and the experience of Australian attitudes and policies over a given time. Refugee status can lead to greater language maintenance (eg Polish Catholics, Hungarians), greater language shift (eg Polish Jews) or either (eg prewar German and Austrian refugees). What has proved far less important than in 1976 is the ethos and policies of a specific state, this variable being far outweighed by demographic consideration.

Many apparent trends in Australia's linguistic demography are highlighted through the change in the language question. Despite this there is an overall increase in the use of Greek in the second generation, as well as Maltese and Macedonian. Where the change in the wording makes little or no difference, among the children of the newly-arrived, there is also a decline in language shift. The patterns of language use in the newer (Arabic-, Chinese-, Turkish- speaking) and revitalised (Polish-speaking) groups would indicate a strengthened trend towards language maintenance.

## Implications for the National Policy on Languages

The above study emphasises the need to keep language questions constant for at least two censuses (Cf. Clyne 1988:22). The 'home language' question does not provide sufficient data on language use for a comprehensive policy on languages or for comparative purposes. However, the responses to it in the 1986 census do indicate that more educational support is required for many older established languages, such as Italian, German, Dutch and Polish for Australia to be able to benefit from its linguistic resources. To an increasing extent the home domain is not the main domain of community language use (Clyne 1988).

Research will be required on first language activation and reactivation so that day schools and part-time ethnic schools can develop the most appropriate methods of teaching community languages to children who have more limited home background in the languages than their counterparts in previous generations. Opportunities to serve children with limited home backgrounds may be bilingual (immersion) programs in primary schools (Imberger 1986, Clyne 1986). Here a new domain and new conceptual areas (through specific subjects) may provide the necessary input in a way which can serve complete beginners in the language as well. Considering the very high language shift in the majority of families based on an exogamous marriage, parents need to be given more information on the best possibilities for language maintenance, including bilingual language acquisition on the model of 'one parent, one language' (Saunders 1988).

Language policies should take into account the substantial rise of the 'new languages' among the young (see Table 7). Arabic and Chinese, both of which are important international and 'trade' languages, are already used more in the new Sydney primary school generation than are Italian and Greek. On the other hand, languages such as Italian, Greek, German, Polish and Dutch, will, for some time, be important for the provision of services to the elderly.

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### Note

Stephanie Jaehrling produced the tables based on a matrix table provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Michael Clyne carried out the analysis and interpretation. The authors are indebted to AACLAME for financial support and to Ian Coulter who produced the computer program.

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# Banishing Fear from Assessing LOTE* Learning: A Profiling Approach

*by **Marta Rado** and **Chris Reynolds***

It is no easy task to devise ways of assessing and reporting on achievement in LOTE learning which validly reflect the particular nature of language, language development and the course structure adopted. Not all current approaches do this, but profiling seems more likely to be successful than most, while also providing more information about what a student can do.

Recent statements of Commonwealth Government policy in the area of national curriculum have proposed the use of student records of achievement. This proposal seems to reflect not only recognition at the national level of the need for more coordination in curriculum and assessment, but also the growing recognition by school authorities of the importance of recording and reporting student achievement. While this paper is concerned with exploring more effective ways of recording and reporting students' language learning achievements and, in particular, with what has come to be called the profiling approach, much of what is proposed here will be applicable to other areas of the curriculum.

Profiling involves both teachers and students in monitoring, recording, assessing and reporting student progress in a way which students, parents and other users can understand. This, after all, is the basis for effective learning and teaching. Profiling involves the production of a precise and detailed record of progress and an end-point or summative statement of what a student can do on completing the course. This statement enables the student to provide authentic and reliable information when seeking employment or further education. Profiling can be used in any area of the curriculum, but in LOTE curriculum it is particularly helpful for recording in detail what a student can and cannot do in a language.

## Student Profiles in LOTE

Common in many schools is the grade-and-comment approach to reporting student achievement. This provides an end-point and global grade representing an aggregate of the specific assessments made of student performance in the course. This aggregate grade is then elaborated in a brief written comment. The major limitations to this approach are that the written information is often not sufficiently precise to be of real use to teachers or students, consisting as it usually does of a global or overall grading for a year's work, accompanied by some very blurred and inexact comments which extend or elaborate the information.

Secondly, curriculum accountability in such an approach is low and the possibilities for valid decision-making about student learning outcomes is very limited.

In the grade-and-comment approach, teachers do not have an adequate basis for monitoring student achievement and, therefore, for taking action. Students, not clearly aware of what their achievements have been and therefore where they need to focus their efforts for the upcoming period, can lose direction and motivation. Indeed, student motivation and commitment may sink to quite low levels. LOTE teachers in particular know how highly motivated and committed students must be if they are to maintain the momentum necessary to learn a LOTE effectively.

## The Challenge for Language Teaching and Assessment

The forms of assessment and reporting which schools adopt, then, are not matters of minor importance, to be tacked on, as it were, after the teaching and learning have been done. On the contrary, they sit at the very heart of LOTE learning. What we are able to say about a student's learning in LOTE will reflect our view of the nature of language, of how language is learned and of our operational assumptions about how best to teach it.

## Language

Elsewhere (Rado and Reynolds 1988) we have argued for a discourse approach to language. Discourse forms are the patterns of language which speakers use quite unconsciously when, for example, they recount an anecdote (narrative discourse form) or mount an argument (argumentative discourse form). Because they have been socialised as language users they 'know' that there are certain rules or conventions to be followed. Those that follow them skilfully are referred to, often with admiration, as 'good story-tellers' or as being able to 'argue well'.

Many discourse forms are shared across languages and the style adopted by any given speaker is, as we know at first-hand, heavily influenced by the context and purpose which that discourse form serves. Accordingly, the language used will also vary in style and at times in complexity.

The discourse approach acknowledges the universal features of language while at the same time allowing for flexibility and adaptability for specific languages and for particular groups of learners. It enables us also to develop a common flexible framework within which to teach language.

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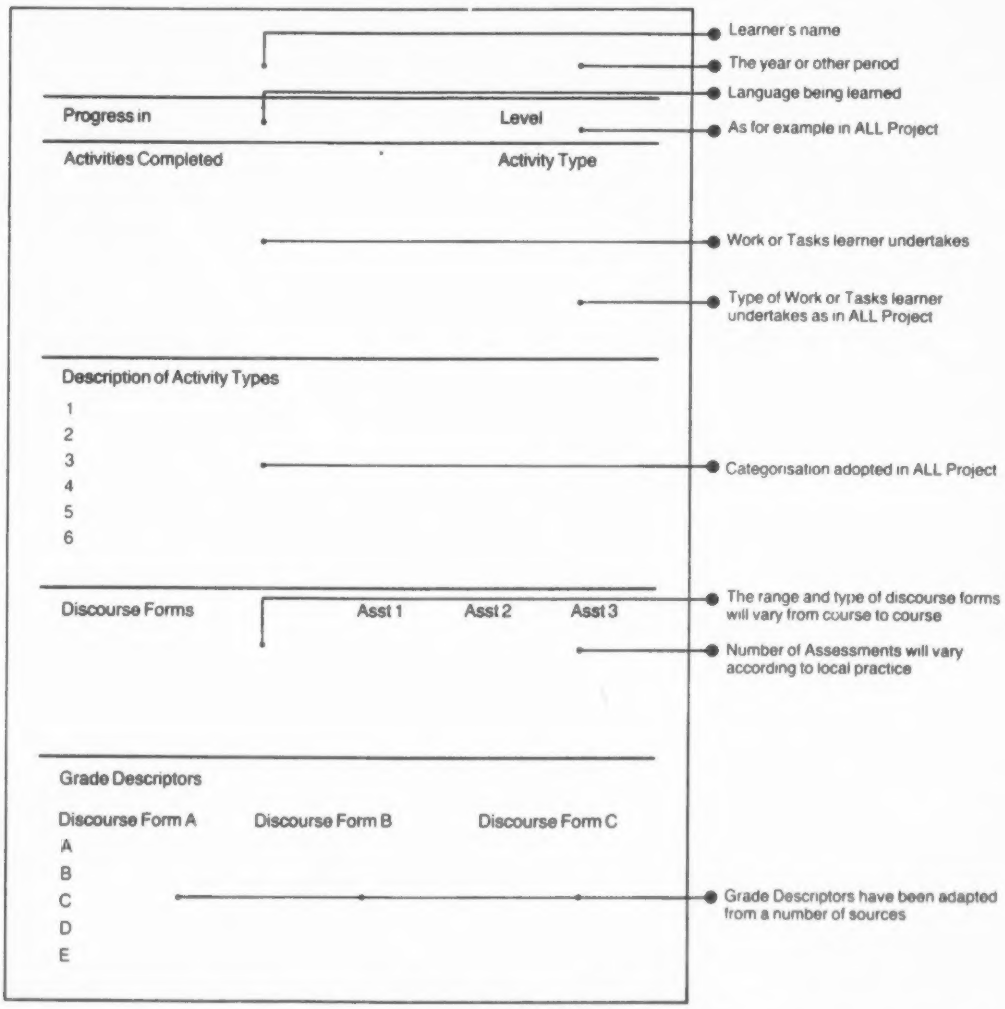
* *Languages Other Than English*

## Learning Language

The course which a LOTE teacher devises will best serve the learner if it harmonises with the ways in which language is naturally learned. We assume that there are developmental stages in this process which mirror, to a greater or lesser extent, other aspects of development, be they personal, cognitive or social amongst many. We assume also that these developmental stages can be conceived in terms of the progressive mastery of discourse forms.

Take the very important narrative discourse form. The work of Dixon and Stratta (1981) on mother-tongue English suggests that there are clear developmental stages in the use of narrative discourse and that mastery of the narrative form moves from the egocentric to the evaluative. In an Australian study (Rado and Foster, forthcoming, pp 13–27) it was found that students of both English-speaking and non-English speaking backgrounds used evaluative and audience orientation cues and markers. In telling a story, orientation cues give the hearer/reader factual information about such things

**Figure 1** Profiling: Report of progress in learning a LOTE

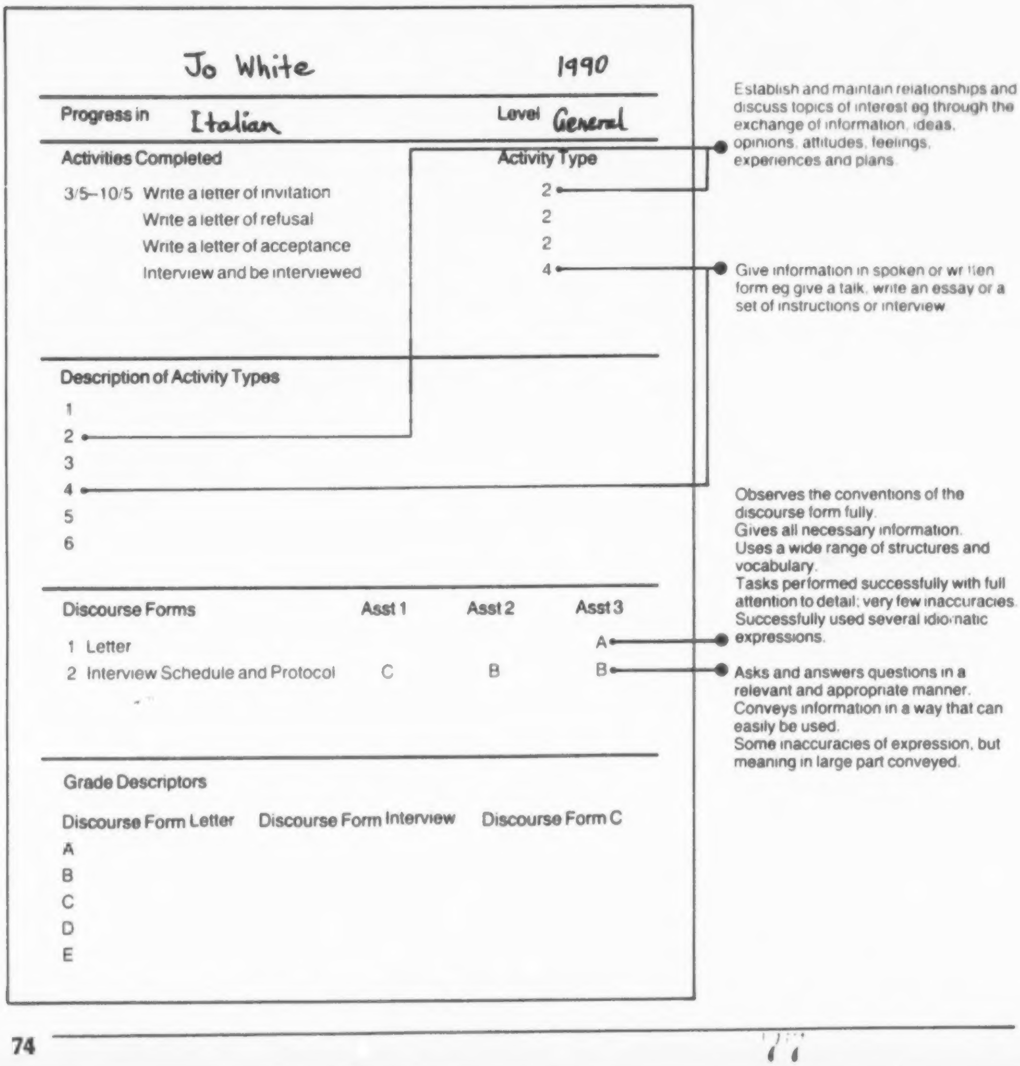

Learner s name
The year or other period
Language being learned
Progress in
Level
As for example in ALL Project
Activities Completed
Activity Type
Work or Tasks learner undertakes
Type of Work or Tasks learner undertakes as in ALL Project
Description of Activity Types
1
2
3
4
5
6
Categorisation adopted in ALL Project
Discourse Forms
Asst 1
Asst 2
Asst 3
The range and type of discourse forms will vary from course to course
Number of Assessments will vary according to local practice
Grade Descriptors
Discourse Form A
Discourse Form B
Discourse Form C
A
B
C
D
E
Grade Descriptors have been adapted from a number of sources

as persons, objects, time and location, for example, 'He got the money from the counter'. Evaluation cues give guidance in what to think of persons, their internal states and experiences, for example, 'She got really mad'. The use of these cues and markers is a major indicator of the level of mastery attained by the student in narrative discourse. These research findings provide educators with a basis for teaching and evaluating. In effect, a language pedagogy can be built on a model of development in discourse.

## Language Teaching

Language is best taught, not by focusing the student's attention on the discourse forms as such, but by attending to learning activities which, as the teacher plans it, draw upon these forms. Building a collection of pieces written about topics of interest to the learner, or oral reports on a text or texts the student has read, and the extension of the range of topics about which conversation can be undertaken are some of the more stimulating activities for the

**Figure 1a** Profiling: Report of progress in learning a LOTE



Jo White 1990

Progress in Italian Level General

| Activities Completed | | Activity Type |
|---|---|---|
| 3/5–10/5 | Write a letter of invitation | 2 |
| | Write a letter of refusal | 2 |
| | Write a letter of acceptance | 2 |
| | Interview and be interviewed | 4 |

Description of Activity Types

1
2
3
4
5
6

| Discourse Forms | Asst 1 | Asst 2 | Asst 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Letter | | | A |
| 2 Interview Schedule and Protocol | C | B | B |

Grade Descriptors

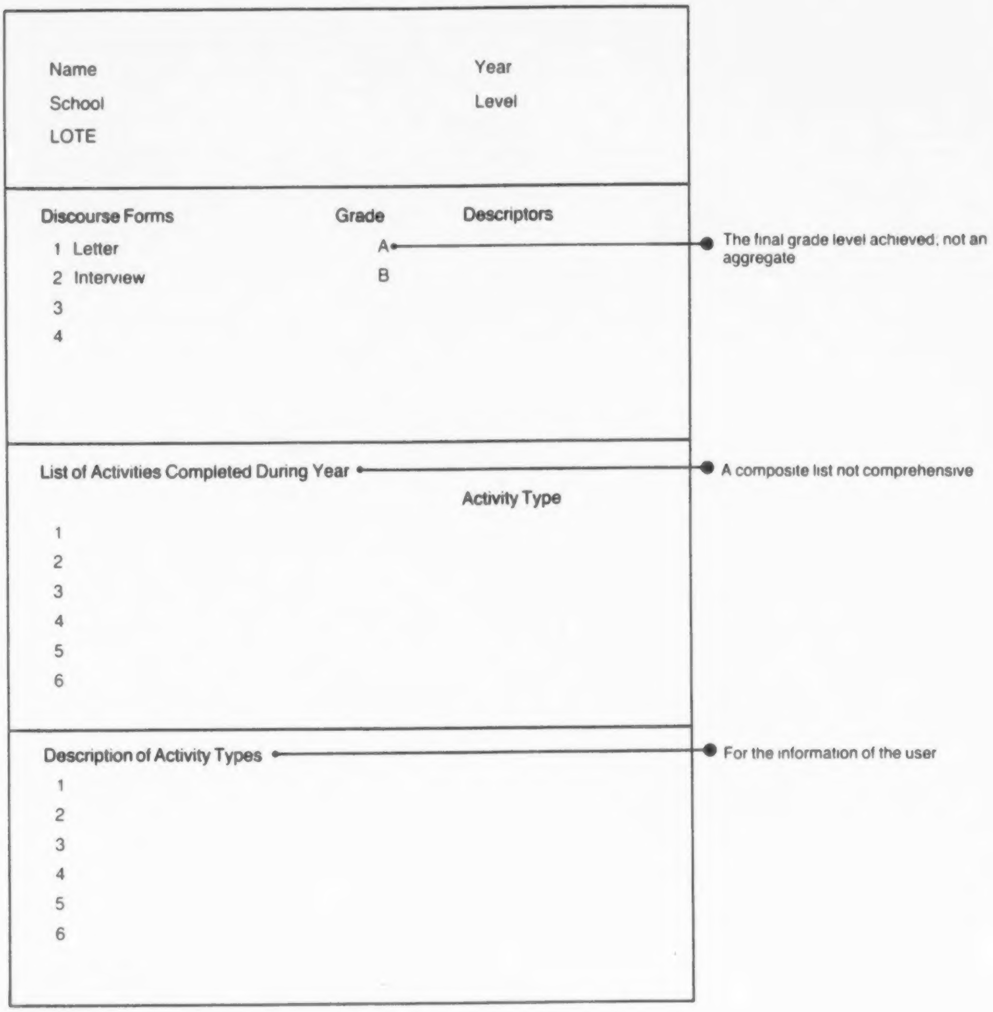
| Discourse Form Letter | Discourse Form Interview | Discourse Form C |
|---|---|---|
| A | | |
| B | | |
| C | | |
| D | | |
| E | | |

Establish and maintain relationships and discuss topics of interest eg through the exchange of information, ideas, opinions, attitudes, feelings, experiences and plans.

Give information in spoken or written form eg give a talk, write an essay or a set of instructions or interview.

Observes the conventions of the discourse form fully.
Gives all necessary information.
Uses a wide range of structures and vocabulary.
Tasks performed successfully with full attention to detail; very few inaccuracies.
Successfully used several idiomatic expressions.

Asks and answers questions in a relevant and appropriate manner.
Conveys information in a way that can easily be used.
Some inaccuracies of expression, but meaning in large part conveyed.



Name
School
LOTE

Year
Level

| Discourse Forms | Grade | Descriptors |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Letter | A | |
| 2 Interview | B | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

The final grade level achieved, not an aggregate

List of Activities Completed During Year

| | Activity Type |
|---|---|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

A composite list not comprehensive

Description of Activity Types
1
2
3
4
5
6

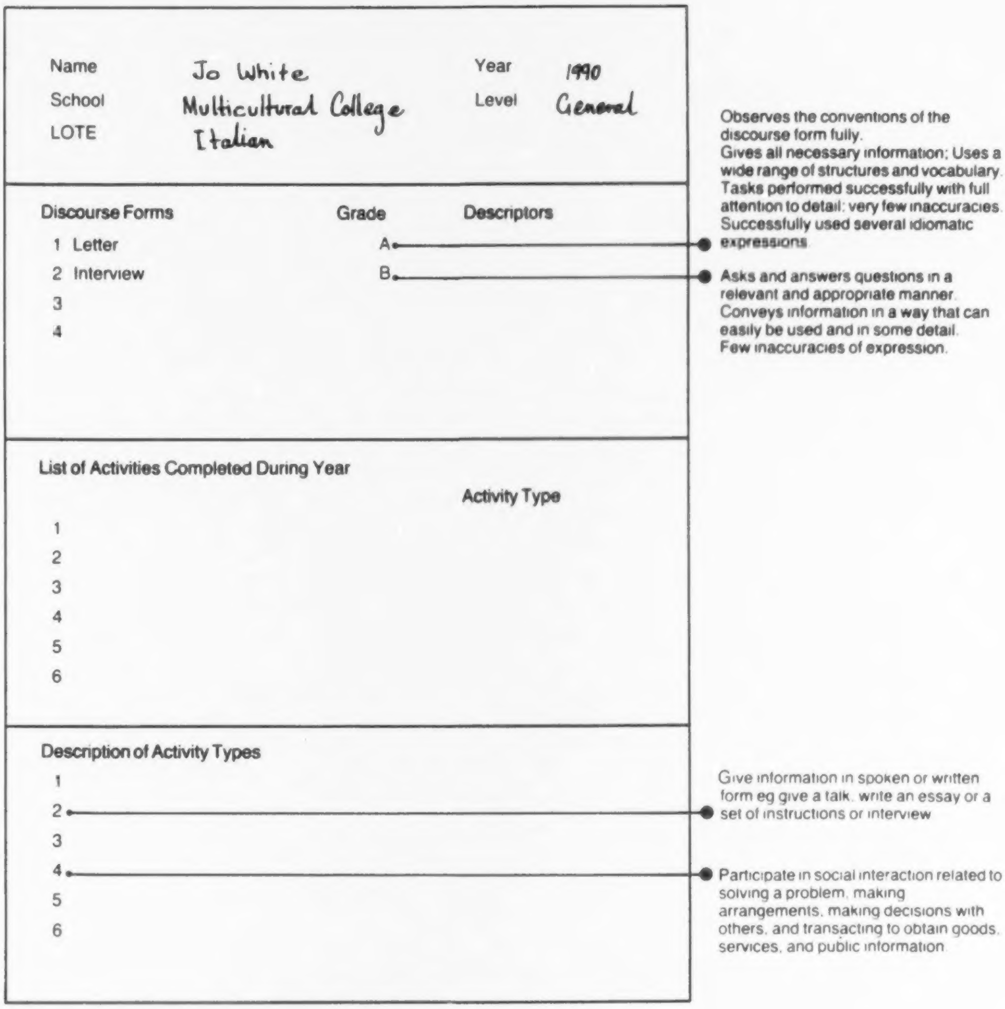
For the information of the user

**Figure 2** End-point profile for LOTE

LOTE learner. In the process of negotiating these activities with the student, the teacher will ensure that they are designed to enable the progressive mastery of the range of discourse forms suited to the student's purposes. Both the teacher's purpose — namely to enhance the student's mastery of a range of discourse forms — and the student's purpose — to complete a range of language activites — should be reflected in the recording and reporting of the assessment.

## Profiles in a Discourse-Driven Curriculum

Progress in development in discourse may be recorded at significant points along the student's learning path. Criteria for assessing discourse development will be derived from discourse and other linguistic features in combination with a record of the activities and activity-types which the student has undertaken. 'Activities are defined as the ways



Name Jo White
School Multicultural College
LOTE Italian

Year 1990
Level General

| Discourse Forms | Grade | Descriptors |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Letter | A | Observes the conventions of the discourse form fully. Gives all necessary information; Uses a wide range of structures and vocabulary. Tasks performed successfully with full attention to detail: very few inaccuracies. Successfully used several idiomatic expressions |
| 2 Interview | B | Asks and answers questions in a relevant and appropriate manner. Conveys information in a way that can easily be used and in some detail. Few inaccuracies of expression. |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

List of Activities Completed During Year

| | Activity Type |
|---|---|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

Description of Activity Types

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | |
| 2 | Give information in spoken or written form eg give a talk, write an essay or a set of instructions or interview |
| 3 | |
| 4 | Participate in social interaction related to solving a problem, making arrangements, making decisions with others, and transacting to obtain goods, services, and public information |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

**Figure 2a** End-point profile for LOTE

in which discourse forms are made to function in a particular context . . . for example, a letter may function as an invitation, a business request, an expression of sympathy, a literacy text.' (VCE LOTE Field of Study, 1988: 7). By activity-types we mean quite simply a grouping of activities according to the purpose they predominantly serve. The Australian Language Levels (ALL) Project has identified three main uses, namely for interpersonal use (e.g., discussing topics of interest), for informational use (e.g., giving a report) and for 'aesthetic' use (e.g., expressing feelings, ideas in a story, song). For all three categories of activity-types information should be recorded and reported on progressively and in summative form.

## A Bimodal Profile Approach

Figure 1 is an example of an uncompleted form for recording progress in learning a LOTE. It is marked to indicate the four key boxes. Box 1 refers to work done in two ways. First, the activity itself is identified and then the category or type of activity is designated. Box 2 lists the types of activity according to the categorisation adopted in the ALL Project. Box 3 refers to the assessments of student work according to the discourse forms used in this course for each of which a grade is awarded. Box 4 lists the discourse forms used together with descriptors for each grade level.

Figure 1a is a completed example of the form for recording progress in learning a LOTE.

There are several features of the completed record which should be noted. The first of these is that, while the activities and the activity types are of the kind which the ALL Project has prepared (ALL Guidelines 1988), we have used examples collected from various sources. These examples do not fully meet the requirements of the approach we are exploring here. However, in our opinion there is a great deal of work still to be done before an acceptable range of grade descriptors for the various discourse forms becomes available. By developing the concept that is described in this paper, we have highlighted the need for such work.

Figure 2, below, is an example of an uncompleted end-point report intended to record a student's work in LOTE over the period of a year.

The end-point report is designed to be consistent with the Record of Progress (Figure 1). In other words, what we have here are two closely related sheets — one for recording and the other for reporting. For reasons of convenience there are some minor changes in format from one to the other, but in all major respects the information contained in the end-point report is identical to that presented on the progress sheet.

Figure 2a is a completed example of the end-point report. It shows how a profile may be designed which records both the completion of activities and the attainment of certain levels of proficiency by the student.

## Key Features

Key features of this approach to recording and reporting are, first, that it is based on student work undertaken over the period of a whole year or more. Secondly, it provides clear statements about the levels of proficiency reached in each discourse form used. Thirdly, it describes language activities completed by the student so that employers and other users of the information may have a detailed picture of what a student has done and can do.

Finally, and by contrast with other approaches, the profiling approach provides the advantage of explicitness for student, teacher and user. The strengths and possibilities of the profiling approach are real because, where information is provided and understanding is created in a learner's mind, fear and anxiety are dissipated and opportunities for effective career orientation are enhanced.

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*Dr Marta Rado is a Honorary Research Fellow at La Trobe University and an applied linguist with special interest in bilingualism and education. For the last few years she has played a major role in redesigning LOTE curriculum for the new Victorian Certificate of Education.*

# Some thoughts on *Gender, Inequality and Language Reform*

***by Anne Pauwels***

In October 1988 the fourth edition of the Commonwealth Style Manual containing three new chapters, on copy-editing, publishing and on non-sexist language use, was launched by the Minister for Administrative Services. The chapter on non-sexist language had been commissioned by the Office of the Status of Women which had engaged a consultant (myself) to assist in writing the guidelines on non-sexist language.

Media coverage of the style manual was almost solely focused on the 17-page chapter dealing with non-sexist language. It is not surprising that this chapter monopolised the media reports because it was new, it was considered controversial and it was sufficiently non-technical in nature to allow anyone to have a say. After all, it is perhaps more difficult to get excited about punctuation or to sensationalise the issue of italics than to enter into debate about the representation of human beings in language.

> 'It is perhaps more difficult to get excited about punctuation or to sensationalise the issue of italics than to enter into debate about the representation of human beings in language.'

It is not my intention in this article to review the media coverage or to use it as a forum to refute criticism of non-sexist guidelines. Instead, my aim is to reflect on the need for reform to ensure a fair treatment of the sexes in language. I shall also outline various approaches to the issue of sexist language reform and discuss some of the difficulties involved in the process of planning reforms. Finally, I shall comment on the role of guidelines in promoting language reform.

## Is language sexist?

Inherent in a discussion about the need for reform regarding the representation of the sexes in language is the question: Is language sexist? Sexism has generally been defined as the discriminatory treatment of people on the basis of their sex.

Sexist language is defined as language which treats, represents and defines women and men in a discriminatory manner. In most cases the gender/sex bias in languages is in favour of men who are treated as the norm and the point of reference for the human species. Women are relegated to a secondary, often dependent position in language.

During the past 15 years, hundreds of essays, research projects and experiments have provided evidence that many languages express a bias against women in both structure and use. Most researchers also point at the negative impact of such language use on women's self image (see Thorne, Kramarae, Henley 1983). The women's movement (especially during the 1970s) was undoubtedly the main force to focus attention and trigger research on the issue of the linguistic inequality of the sexes. Yet there is some evidence that early (male) grammarians and linguists not only examined the representation of the sexes in English, but also conceded that English was biased against the female sex (see Stanley 1978 and Baron 1986). However, they stopped short of recommending reform: they predicted that men would persist in refusing to grant equal status to women in language.

The situation in the 1980s can be best described as one of increasing awareness of, and admission of, the existence of sexism in language, both in academic and official circles.

Among academics, especially linguists and other social scientists, the focus of the debate has shifted away from the discussion of the extent of sexism in language to the discussion of the need for, and the viability of, reform.

## Sexism in the English language

Since the major focus of this article is on the issue of language reform, it is not my intention to give an extensive description of the various forms of sexism in English. The reader is referred to the extensive analyses of sexism in English described, for example, in Nilsen et al. (1977), Miller & Swift (1980) and Frank & Anshen (1983).

> 'During the past 15 years, hundreds of essays, research projects and experiments have provided evidence that many languages express a bias against women in both structure and use.'

The structure and the use of English reflect and contribute to the subordinate status of women. Sexism is found in the lexicon, in word formation and in patterns of gender marking in nouns and pronouns. The abundance of trivialising and derogatory terms for women, especially in the register of sexual relations, and the 'semantic' derogation of

THE AGE, Friday 14 October 1988

ACCENT

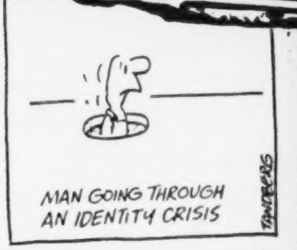
# MEN OVERBOARD

## Is man a person?

The Federal Government's new non-sexist language guidelines have given some newsmen a field day. At right, **ROSEMARY WEST** argues that they are making a mountain out of a manhole. Left, **VERONICA SCHWARTZ** calls for more radical reform, while **EVA COX** is glad she is not part of mankind.

LOIS

## *You can still call Bob Hawke a statesman*



# THE 'UNMANNING' OF THE LANGUAGE

YOU HAVE YOUR SAY - PAGE 12

# No man's land in a war on language

**By HUGO KELLY,**
**Canberra**

Bob Hawke is no longer a state man. The Prime Minister is now according to the Minister fo Administrative Services, M West, our "state leader", or jus plain "leader".

Nor is the Rhodes scholar Prime Minister a man of letters. He may be a scholar or a member of the literati or even an intellectual, but the phrase "man of letters" is sexist, according to the Government, and now unacceptable.

Mr West yesterday launched the 1988 edition of the Commonwealth 'Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers'. Intended for those producing Government publications, it includes a section on sexist language.

The Office of the Status omen commissioned a

Letters

G.P.O Box

Sydney, NSW, 2001

# Synthetic English outrage

## For 1984, read 1988

APROPOS your excellent leader concerning the Australian Government Publishing Service's Style Manual (7/8), it may be appropriate to remind those who think that 1984 was the nightmare of a sick author to think again.

## The underlying threat to us

SIR – So the Federal Government intends to persist, through its style manual, in its misbegotten attempts at linguistic engineering.

This in itself does not distress me, for Public Service standards of literacy have always been more of a bad joke than a serious threat to language.

tion of a collective burden of guilt for the worst excesses of the misfits, the maniacs and the criminals in our midst.

And, of course we must bask en masse in the reflected glory of our sportsmen and other luminaries (not to mention our fathers

achievement by the authors of the new Public Service Style Manual. We must all give thanks for the money spent on this significant magnum opus. We should all praise this essential revision of usage which has, until now, been the foundation of

### Superperson

### Newspeak

### How sad

### Shocked

### Clap-trap

### Man-haters

### Too much neutralisation

### Warm thanks

### I am a feminist but . . .

### Such fatuity

### Verbal garbage

### Disgraceful

### Ridiculous

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neutral or positive terms for women (e.g., *mistress, madam, lady*, see Schulz 1975) are testimony of the attitude towards women as mainly sex objects. Furthermore, many words and expressions used for women express their status as a commodity, a piece of property (e.g., *to marry off, to give the bride away, Mrs./Miss*).

The language used by men and the terms to describe them are considered the norm. The use of the same gender (masculine) to mark and refer to generic nouns and nouns designating male persons leads to the invisibility of women and may cause confusion about the intended meaning (male referent?, human referent? see Martyna 1978, Mackay 1980a, 1980b). If sex-specific nouns are formed by a process of derivation, it is almost always the noun designating the female which is derived from the noun denoting the male, often by suffixing *-ess, -ette*, or *-trix* to the masculine noun.

'Among academics, especially linguists and other social scientists, the focus of the debate has shifted to the need for, and the viability of, reform.'

These feminine suffixes are seen as having a trivialising effect on the description of women, especially in relation to job titles and occupational terms. Trivialisation of women also results from the asymmetrical use of male-female pairs such as *boy-girl, gentleman-lady, man-woman*. Sex stereotyping and gratuitous sex specification (*male nurse, woman doctor*) are a further hindrance to the fair treatment of women and men in language. Masculine generic nouns ending in *-man*, the generic pronouns *he/his* are often singled out as the most controversial forms of sexism and as the most difficult to change.

## To reform or not to reform sexist language

The acknowledgement that sexism exists in language does not guarantee a unanimous decision to propose reform. Choosing to reform or not to reform sexist language (use) seems linked to one's view of the relationship between language and society, between language and culture. If this view is one of linguistic determinism (the strong version of the Whorfian hypothesis), language is seen as causing women's oppression and subordination. Linguistic reform is therefore an absolute necessity to obtain equality of the sexes. An interactionist view of the language-society-culture relationship also favours language reform since 'language helps enact and transact every type of inequality, including that of the sexes' (Thorne & Henley 1975:15).

If language is seen to merely reflect social organisation and cultural constructs, language reform is considered futile since it would not effect social change. According to this view, social change precedes linguistic change: for instance, generically used words such as *chairman, statesman* or *cameraman* will (re)claim their generic meanings, when social change leads to more women occupying such positions.

The need for reform has also been justified by legal argument. Declarations such as the *United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, and Sex Discrimination Acts proclaim the rights of women to equality in all spheres of life. Equality of the sexes in language should therefore not be excluded. Others argue for reform by stressing the importance of language as a means of identification, as a means of expressing one's identity. Like other minority and powerless groups, women feel increasingly alienated from language and language use. Women see themselves described and defined by words and expressions which are not their own. They experience themselves in language through the language of others.

'Choosing to reform or not to reform sexist language (use) seems linked to one's view of the relationship between language and culture.'

Besides using the argument that 'social change leads to linguistic change' opponents of reform have justified their opposition with arguments of aestheticism, triviality, unviability and creativity. The aesthetic argument condemns non-sexist language reform because the proposed alternatives are regarded as awkward, ugly, clumsy and in bad taste. Resistance to change is thus justified on the grounds of 'taste'. The triviality argument dismisses the problem of sexist language as a non-substantive issue which gets in the way of substantive issues of equality. According to the 'impossibility or unviability' argument, some of the sexist categories or structures (e.g., masculine generic) do not lend themselves to change, planned or unplanned. Lakoff (1975:45) for instance, stated that an attempt to change pronominal usage was futile because the system of pronouns was less open to change. Furthermore, non-sexist language reform is seen as curtailing the expressive possibilities of a language. Language reform is rejected because it stifles linguistic creativity.

I would like to argue for reform from the interactionist point of view. The structure and use of a language reflect in many ways the culture, the ideology and the socio-political organisation of the society/ies to which it is linked. However, language also *constrains* one's view of reality. For example, the existence of two honorifics for women, *Mrs.* — *Miss*, as opposed to one for men, *Mr.*, forces language users to consider the issue of marital status for women, but not for men. I do not doubt that social changes have led to some linguistic changes regarding the representations of the sexes without the 'intervention' (benefit) of planned language reform.

> 'Besides using the argument that "social change leads to linguistic change", opponents of reform have justified their opposition with arguments of aestheticism, triviality, unviability and creativity.'

The presence of women in international business and the growing number of women in large business enterprises have led to an extension of the semantic range of the word *businesswoman*. *Businesswoman* no longer mainly conveys an image of *the female owner of a (small) shop*. The greater participation of women in the workforce has led to such words and expressions as *career woman, working woman*. However, in many respects linguistic change lags clearly behind social change. Despite the ever growing numbers of female doctors and lawyers, for example, the language used to describe members of these professions still renders a male image of such professionals. In this respect, language reform could help close the gap between changes in social reality and linguistic reality. On the other hand, language reform may also be desirable to facilitate or speed up the process of social change. Using gender-inclusive pronouns and nouns in advertisements and descriptions of male-identified occupations may help people perceive such jobs as accessible to men *and* women.

## Which changes: strategies for reform

Those who opt for language reform as a desirable strategy to eliminate discrimination are faced with the question of which changes are deemed necessary and desirable in reaching the target of gender-inclusive/non-sexist language. Since the 1970s many different strategies for reform have been proposed. There are strategies advocating the abandoning of patriarchal language altogether and the creation of a new woman-centred language which embodies women's ideas, experiences and desires. This may involve semantic revaluation of female words such as *hag, crone, witch* or the reviving of old definitions (e.g., *spinster*). Sometimes changes in spelling, *wimmyn* for *women* or the reorganisation of morphological boundaries *herstory* for *history* are made to signal the break away from patriarchal language. In other strategies the need to make women visible in all levels of language is stressed. This is usually achieved by always mentioning both men and women, e.g., *female and male* doctors, *actresses and actors, businessmen and women*, and by using the pronouns *she* and *her* generically.

In contrast to the previous strategy is that of promoting gender-neutralisation as the desired strategy to ensure linguistic equality of the sexes. Agent nouns, especially occupational terms, are neutralised for gender. Differences in strategies are often a reflection and a result of differences in ideological orientation, academic training, professional orientation and philosophical tradition.

None of the proposals is without its share of problems and inconsistencies (for a survey of criticism see Cameron 1985). Some are seen to be linguistically viable, but less likely to effect the desired change. Other proposals are judged quite effective in bringing the linguistic inequality of the sexes to the attention of language users, but are also condemned as linguistically too radical: they are seen to cause massive linguistic disruption and alienation, making their general adoption unlikely (e.g., Daly's language use in Gyn/Ecology 1978).

## Planning for reform: some guidelines and considerations

Clearly the issue of language reform to eliminate sexism in language is quite complex. In the previous paragraphs I have shown that language reform aimed at ensuring the fair treatment of women and men can be approached from various angles, leading to the promotion of diverse, sometimes opposing strategies and recommendations. Language planners, policymakers and those who are asked or who take it upon themselves to advise and put forward non-sexist proposals should therefore be aware of the various strategies and should be able to evaluate their effectiveness in securing linguistic equality of the sexes.

In this section I would like to propose some guidelines which could help determine the most suitable strategies to be adopted, and provide guidance in the formulation and the selection of non-sexist alternatives. The guidelines described below have helped me in drafting the non-sexist proposals for the Style Manual. However, they do not offer solutions for quite a few problems associated with this type of language reform, as I shall demonstrate by discussing the difficulties involved in replacing the masculine generic pronoun.

Although the aim of non-sexist language reform should always be the elimination of linguistic inequality between men and women, the approach taken to reach this objective, and the suggestions made, may vary somewhat to reflect the different needs of various groups of language users. Furthermore, different types and domains of language use may restrict or widen the options for reform.

> 'The avoidance or elimination of sexist expressions should not result in the loss of stylistic variation, nor should it lead to ignoring the linguistic characteristics and conventions of specific types of discourse.'

The needs of language users wishing to make women, women's achievements and women's experiences visible in their creative writing may be better served by the strategy of a woman-centred language than by the strategy of gender-neutralisation. Editors of government documents are probably more interested in eliminating sexist expressions in an unobtrusive manner. Authors of public documents are in a position to avoid rather than eliminate sexist expressions which may change their needs for appropriate alternatives and strategies.

The avoidance or elimination of sexist expressions should not result in the loss of stylistic variation, nor should it lead to ignoring the linguistic characteristics and conventions of specific types of discourse. When proposing non-sexist alternatives, attention should be drawn to the fact that non-sexist expressions may not have the same stylistic range as the sexist expression. Alternatively, multiple expressions may be suggested. For example, the replacement of the word *postman* by *postie* may be considered appropriate for spoken, informal interaction. *Postal worker* may be used in a more formal context where the distinction with other employees involved in mail services is not relevant. In a job description the word *maildeliverer* could be seen as more suitable. If the language of legislation is the targeted domain, the non-sexist alternatives should be chosen in such a way that they do not change the legal meaning. Sometimes, recasting the sentence may be more appropriate than replacing individual words.

The formulation and/or selection of non-sexist alternatives should be guided by the principles of linguistic viability and social effectiveness. Since these principles do not generally go hand in hand, it is a major challenge for language planners to find non-sexist expressions which combine the two principles. Information on successful and unsuccessful attempts at linguistic reform, and the study of language change, both past and in progress, may assist in determining the linguistic viability of an expression. For example, is there any evidence that reform by means of neologisms is less likely to be successful than by inducing semantic shift? Are reforms which move against the direction of natural (unconscious) language change unlikely to succeed?

Linguistic viability is also tied, to some degree, to linguistic prescriptivism. If alternatives are promoted which, despite their widespread use through the community, are seen to violate deeply ingrained prescriptive rules of language use, their introduction may be opposed vigorously. Factors such as ambiguity, conceptual availability, imageability, simplicity and functional range of the suggested alternatives may also have an impact on their linguistic viability (see Mackay 1980c).

Of course the linguistic options for change must also be evaluated in terms of their effectiveness to reflect and/or to bring about social change. For example, is the use of gender-neutral words such as *doctor, lawyer, chairperson, engineer, nurse* effective in promoting the idea that there are indeed female doctors, lawyers and male nurses?

As I mentioned earlier, taking these guidelines into consideration does not guarantee problem-free suggestions for reform. The issue of replacing the masculine generic *he(his)* clearly demonstrates that the guidelines may be helpful in formulating alternatives, but not in selecting the alternative(s) to be promoted.

## The pronoun problem

Many suggestions have been made with regard to the replacement of the masculine generic or the avoidance of its use. There are proposals which favour the strategy of pronoun avoidance. These include recasting the sentence in the second person, in the plural or in the passive mode to avoid the use of a pronoun in the third person singular. The repetition of the noun and the deletion of gratuitous pronoun reference are also used to avoid the masculine generic. Other proposals advocate the strategy of replacing the masculine generic by (a) non-sexist pronoun(s). Possible candidates for the role of non-sexist pronouns are:

- a new, sex-indefinite (epicene) pronoun
- the dual, gender-inclusive pronoun *he/she; he or she; she or he* etc.
- singular *they*

> It is a major challenge for language planners to find non-sexist expressions which combine the two principles of linguistic viability and social effectiveness.

Other suggestions have included granting *she* the status of generic pronoun to be used in alternation with *he*, or using a generic pronoun in a sex-exclusive way (see Cameron 1985) i.e. women use *she* as a generic pronoun and men use *he*. Although there are indeed contexts in which the use of a generic pronoun can be avoided, it is not realistic to solve the masculine generic pronoun problem solely by strategies of pronoun avoidance. In many contexts there is a need to indicate a referent by means of a pronoun. It is therefore crucial to propose non-sexist pronouns which could function as alternatives to the masculine generic.

- **A new, sex-indefinite pronoun**

In many respects, the introduction of a new epicene pronoun would be most effective in producing the desired outcome. As a neologism, it is unlikely to have marked male or female connotations so that its meaning would be truly generic. Its distributional patterns would be identical to those of the masculine generic, i.e., the new pronoun could replace the masculine generic in all contexts without causing anaphoric ambiguity or confusion. Its use would be simple and would not interefere with stylistic demands. However, the fact that the pronoun is new, i.e., lexically unavailable, is seen as a major hindrance. Over the past 200 years there have been several attempts at introducing an epicene pronoun (see Baron 1986). So far all attempts have failed in gaining widespread acceptance.

- **The dual, gender-inclusive pronoun**

The dual pronoun *he or she* does not have the disadvantage of being lexically unavailable. It is also clearly gender-inclusive in form and meaning. However, its use is considered problematic from a stylistic point of view. The use of a dual pronoun is described as longwinded, cumbersome and pedantic, especially in speech. Some critics also see functional problems associated with the substitution of the masculine generic by the dual pronoun.

Bolinger (1980) believes that the use of a dual pronoun complicates the anaphoric function of pronouns. He argues that a pronoun in its anaphoric function adds no information: 'we could as well substitute a mathematical symbol. Such virtually empty words behave as empty words normally do: they are de-accented, to attract as little attention as possible' (Bolinger 1980:95). The use of a dual pronoun does not allow this de-accentuation to take place: 'it refuses to take the back seat that all languages reserve for pure anaphora' (Bolinger 1980:96).

- **Singular they**

*Singular they* is not only lexically available, but has also a longstanding history of widespread use as a generic pronoun. According to Bodine (1975) the use of *singular they* was widespread in written (therefore presumably also in spoken) English until the 19th Century when the prescriptive grammar movement opposed its use in both speech and writing. Despite the actions of prescriptive grammarians to eliminate *singular they* on the grounds that it violated the rule of number agreement with its antecedent (no such concerns were expressed with regard to the violation of the gender agreement in the case of the masculine generic) *singular they* has persisted both in speech and writing.

> The issue of replacing the masculine generic *he/his* clearly demonstrates that the guidelines may be helpful in formulating alternatives, but not in selecting the alternative/s to be selected.'

A longitudinal study which I have recently completed (Pauwels 1989) confirmed widespread use of *singular they* in the speech and writing of university students. Increasing use of *singular they* was also observed in the media. Although factors such as lexical availability and widespread use favour the promotion of *singular they* as a sex-indefinite pronoun from a linguistic point of view, there are some other linguistic factors which hinder its promotion. The distributional patterns of *singular they* and the masculine generic are similar but not identical. ►

There are quite a few contexts in which the replacement of the masculine generic by *singular they* would be problematic. Mackay (1980c:357) quotes as functional problems the tradition of using human pronouns to express personal involvement with non-human antecedents 'Death and his brother sleep', or the awkwardness of sentences such as 'I hear Mary's doctor just broke their leg' where sex is unknown. The reflexive pronoun *themself* is also seen as 'sound(ing) bizarre in close proximity to its singular antecedent e.g. *The cover of the book must be designed by the author themself*' (Mackay 1980c:358).

The fact that *singular they* is still regarded as ungrammatical hampers its acceptance as the most viable alternative to the masculine generic.

Finally, the effectiveness of *singular they* in conveying a sex-indefinite meaning has not yet been investigated thoroughly.

> 'The fact that *singular* they is still regarded as ungrammatical hampers its acceptance as the most viable alternative to the masculine generic.'

The decision regarding which pronoun to promote as the most adequate and effective replacement for the masculine generic is clearly difficult. It is therefore not surprising to see that most guidelines for non-sexist language use list all strategies for the avoidance of the masculine generic.

## Promoting language reform: guidelines for non-sexist language use

Guidelines are considered the main and most appropriate vehicle for the promotion of non-sexist language reforms with regard to public and official language use. Both public and official types of language use (e.g., language of legislation, language of educational publications, language of the media, language of bureaucracy) are seen to be most in need of reform because of their influence on determining, transmitting or changing the ways in which the sexes are portrayed. Generally, the aim of guidelines for non-sexist language use is to make authors, editors and public speakers aware of sexist language and to give guidance to them on how to avoid or eliminate sexism in language use. This is done by succinctly describing the ways in which a language discriminates against one sex, by outlining strategies to ensure linguistic equality of the sexes and by providing non-sexist alternative words and expressions. Although the guidelines encourage language users to avoid sexist expressions, they do not prescribe the ways in which this should be done. Furthermore, being neither a dictionary nor a grammar, the guidelines are not exhaustive in their listing of non-sexist alternatives, nor do they describe in detail how these alternatives should be used in different contexts. Decisions about stylistic and contextual appropriateness are left to the user.

Although it is too early to gauge the impact of guidelines on public and official language use in Australia, the effectiveness of guidelines in promoting non-sexist language use will depend largely on the willingness of publishing companies, media organisations and other public and private institutions to adopt them and to implement them in a constructive manner.

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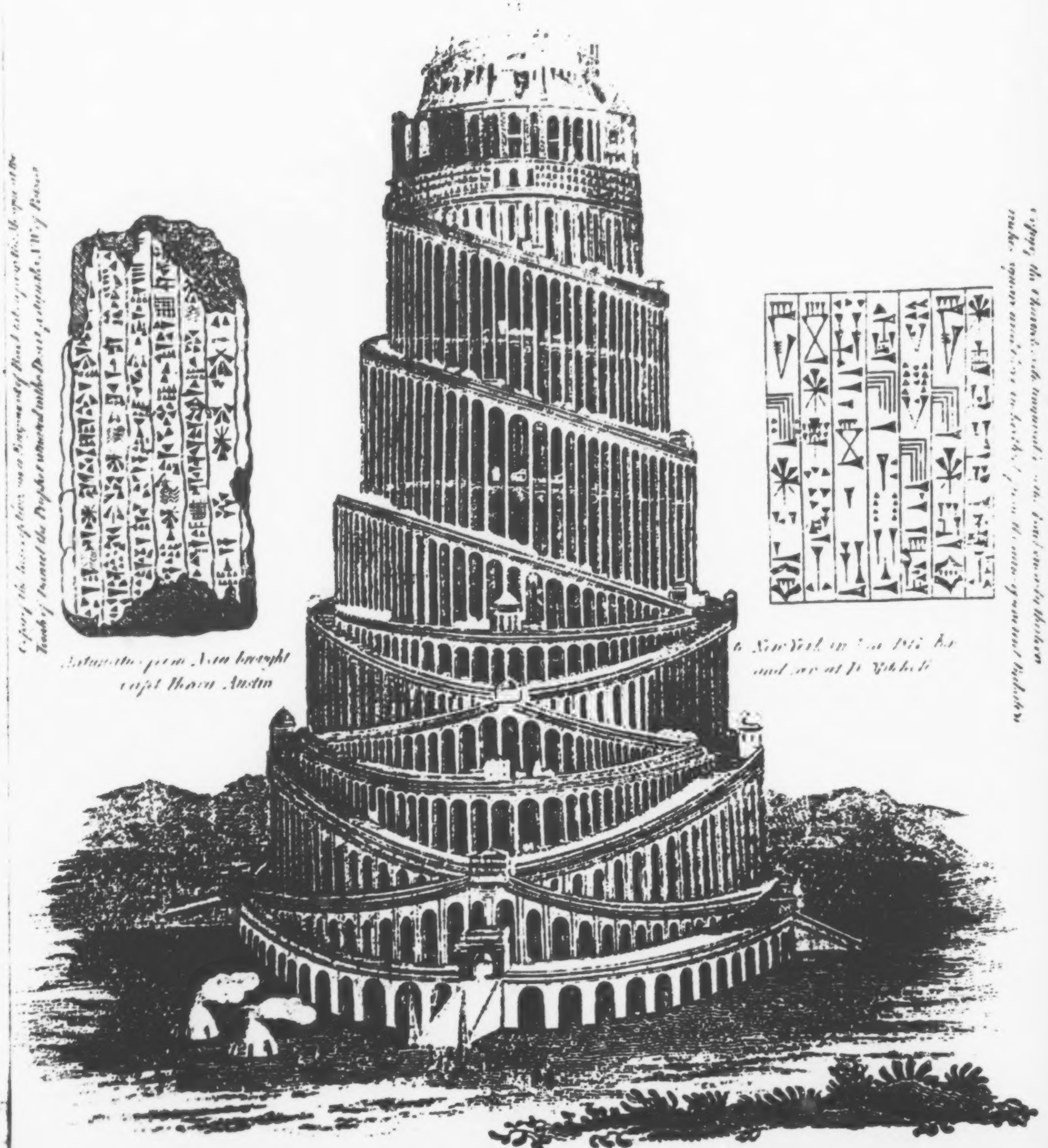
# VOX



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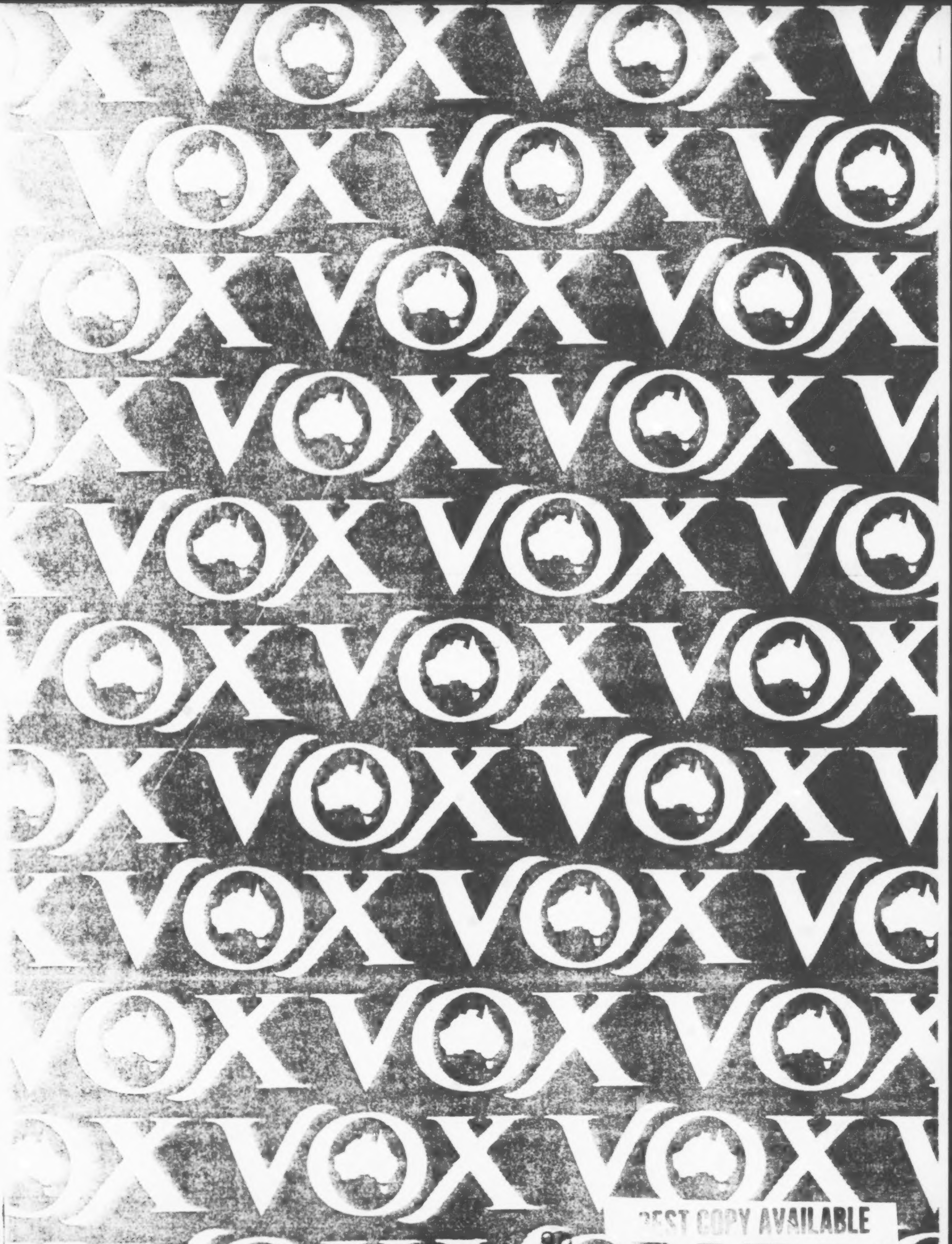

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*VOX* is the journal of the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education. It is a medium for the exchange of information on languages policy and multicultural education issues, and in particular, the National Policy on Languages. Two issues will be published each year.

This issue is presented in two sections. The first section contains information about AACLAME, its activities, the implementation of the National Policy on Languages and recent developments in languages policy in Australia and overseas. The second section consists of contributed articles relating to different aspects of languages policy.

Articles, with photographs or other illustrations where possible, are invited for consideration for future issues. Articles should be approximately 3000 words, and follow the conventions of this issue. All correspondence should be addressed to the

Publications Manager,
AACLAME Secretariat,
Department of Employment, Education and Training,
GPO Box 9880, Canberra ACT 2601 Australia

COVER

The cover illustration of the Tower of Babel is a rendering from a 19th century engraving belonging to the Granger Collection, New York.

The Tower of Babel is said to have been built in the land of Shinar (Babylonia) some time after the Deluge. According to the story in Genesis 11:1–9, the Babylonians wanted to build a city and a tower whose top would reach to heaven. Their project angered Jehova and as a punishment for their presumption he confused their language so that they no longer understood one another and scattered them over the face of the earth. The story appears to be an attempt to explain the existence of diverse human languages and races.

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**Department of Employment, Education and Training**

# From the Chair

The success of the first three issues of our journal is evident in the range, quality and sources of material of this, our fourth. Indeed, we have so many good articles available and promised that *Vox 5* and even *Vox 6* are already taking shape.

The important 'news' accompanying this issue is the widespread support of the NPL — its principles and programs — which major political parties demonstrated during the March 1990 federal election campaign. Advocates of the National Policy on Languages have always maintained that there should be cross-party support for the NPL and a high degree of consensus for a balanced set of programs is in evidence.

In his major statement on immigration, ethnic affairs and multiculturalism, *Foundations for the Future*, the Prime Minister, the Hon R J Hawke, announced his Government's commitment to continued support for a National Policy on Languages, including a balanced program of second language learning in Australian schools, continuation and expansion of English as a Second Language programs for both adults and children, and the establishment of a National Bureau of Language Services.

There were also highly supportive statements from the other major political parties.

Closer to home, on 28 March 1990, the AACLAME hosted a review seminar in Canberra. Entitled 'National Policy on Languages — the Next Decade', the purpose of the seminar was to consider the directions and priorities for the NPL in the future. In particular, it suggested detailed implementation strategies for priority programs in the NPL's second term. Participants included representatives of every State education department, the National Council for Independent Schools, the National Catholic Education Commission, and peak organisations and Commonwealth government departments with an interest in languages policy issues. It was the first time that AACLAME had brought such a diverse group together. The outcomes were very productive and the experience both pleasant and fruitful.

Joseph Lo Bianco

This fourth issue of *Vox* touches directly or indirectly on all aspects of our evolving policies on language: national curriculum planning, international relations, community languages, language testing, English as a Foreign Language, interpreting and translating and trade. These topics are addressed in Part I of the journal. This section also features language policy developments in both the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. Previous issues have looked at developmentis in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

As is by now a tradition, Part II comprises contributed articles. We are honoured to include a fascinating article on the languages of Spain from the Hon Mr Lynn Arnold, Minister for Ethnic Affairs, Industry, Trade and Technology; Agriculture; and Fisheries in the South Australian Government.

This issue also tackles 'revitalisation' in various areas. Both J J Smolicz and I discuss the rationale for revitalising multicultural education in our respective articles, while Bernard Spolsky's article looks at the role of Maori bilingual education in language revitalisation in New Zealand. Merrill Swain et al investigate whether the learning of a third language is enhanced through literacy in one's first language. While this article is based on research in Canada, it is of considerable relevance to educationalists in Australia.

Charles Price brings us back to Australia with an overview of the results of the 1986 Census as they relate to language retention by Ancestry and Generation. Anne McLaren and Helen Tebble discuss the important question of the appropriate linguistic and cultural balance in language teaching for specific professions and how this issue is addressed in their higher education institution. Elaine McKay compares the study of Asia both in Australia and overseas. Robert Eagleson argues the case for using Plain English in all contexts.

As usual, the contents of *Vox 4* remind me of the diversity of the NPL and its interests.

# Developments in Language Education in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory

Continuing the series on languages policy development in each State, this section provides a detailed look at recent developments in both the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory government school systems. The articles were prepared by the ACT and NT Departments of Education respectively.

Other States that have featured in previous issues are South Australia and Tasmania (*Vox* 1), Victoria (*Vox* 2), and NSW (*Vox* 3).

## Developments in Languages Other Than English (LOTE) in ACT Government Schools

### LOTE in ACT Government Schools

*A Guiding Document for ACT Government Schools* will be published in 1990. It includes guiding principles and guidelines for the implementation of programs. The document states that the learning of languages is an important element in the education of all students. Every student should have the opportunity to learn at least one language other than English for as many years as possible. Students should have access to language programs from early primary years since research shows that children of this age group learn linguistic patterns easily, and their attitudes to other cultures are at a formative stage.

At this point LOTE learning is not compulsory in ACT schools. The Department of Education is, however, promoting LOTE learning through a variety of means, including the allotment of staffing points to primary schools introducing a LOTE program. The position paper sets out strategies for developing practical, activities-based communicative programs along the ALL (Australian Language Levels) Guidelines which will encourage language use. The quality of programs will be regularly monitored to ensure that they are rigorous, intellectually demanding and of high quality.

In the past ten years schools in the ACT have been free to develop their own curriculum, based on student needs and community resources. In the 1990s there will be more emphasis on planning, monitoring and measurable outcomes. In LOTE, programs are being organised in clusters within each region to offer learning pathways from Kindergarten to Year 12 or at least, ideally, to a minimum level of proficiency. At various stages, however, learners have the option to exit from a program or choose another LOTE. Beginning courses are found in primary, high school and at the senior secondary level.

There are programs in twenty of the eighty primary schools and in all secondary schools. Most high schools offer two or three languages, and some colleges offer five or six. At the secondary level schools are now expected to offer at least an Asian and a European language. Languages taught in ACT schools are French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Modern Greek and Spanish. These languages are taught at various levels. At the senior secondary school, for example, the levels include Beginning, Intermediate, Continuing and Advanced (native speaker level), which includes courses for the International Baccalaureate. There are also twenty two after-school programs for community languages.

### Resources provided by other governments

- **Franco-Australian bilingual program (Telopea Park School).** The bilingual French program at Telopea Park School evolved as a result of an agreement between the Australian and French Governments in 1983 to provide bilingual education for children from Kindergarten to Year 10. The Australian Government provides four 'out of formula' teachers and the French Government provides seven. In 1990 it is planned to extend this program to Narrabundah College, to allow students the option of bilingual studies in certain subjects at Years 11 and 12.
- **Italian programs.** The Comitato Italiano Assistenza, Canberra (CIAC) is responsible for language programs in Italian in the ACT. It is partially funded through the Ethnic Schools Program and partially through the Italian Government. CIAC funds two part-time teachers in schools.
- **Spanish programs.** The ACT Department of Education has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science related to the teaching of

Spanish in ACT Government schools and in after-school programs. Plans include the exchange of language teachers and/or students with Spain. The Spanish Government provides three teaching positions shared among several schools and after-school programs, and a part-time consultant who works three days a week at the O'Connell Education Centre and two days a week at the Spanish Embassy.

- **Teacher Training inservices, courses and awards.** A variety of inservices, courses and awards are offered by government-sponsored educational institutions, including the Chinese, French, Greek, Italian and Spanish Governments, the Goethe Institute and the Japan Foundation. Recently the Australia Japan Foundation and the Australia Indonesia Institute have also provided generous support for teacher training.

## Special DEET Programs

Programs funded to implement the National Policy on Languages have inspired a number of projects in ACT government schools, and have significantly lifted the profile of languages in the schools. Teachers' morale has improved, although LOTE has not yet achieved a strong place in the curriculum. The projects funded since 1988 are as follows:

**Projects funded under the Australian Second Language Learning Program**

- **The Spanish National Curriculum Project K-12.** A draft curriculum has been prepared for primary programs, Stages A & B, which incorporates suggestions for background speakers at Stages C & D. This draft has been offered to members of the national and local reference groups for trialling. Stage 1 high school is being prepared for trialling, and Stage 2 is under way. A curriculum for senior secondary will be drafted later in 1990. A list of suggested materials to accompany the curriculum is also being prepared, together with resources from the Spanish Government.
- **An Overview of LOTE Programs in ACT Primary Schools** was completed in 1988, followed in 1989-90 by a **Research/Survey of LOTE programs in ACT Government Schools**. This project is designed to explore attitudes to issues which are important in future planning, such as networking, continuity in LOTE programs and choice of LOTE. The results are intended primarily to assist departmental officers in imple-

Un elephant c'est haut — Learning French at Lyneham Primary School. *(Photo courtesy of Curriculum Section ACT Department of Education)*

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menting the forthcoming ACT Guiding Document on LOTE. Areas of concern for the 1990 survey will include providing a choice of Asian and European languages of major importance to Australia, and setting up closer links with after school programs.

- **Professional development of teachers.** These funds have facilitated a variety of inservices and activities workshops, many of which have been related to designing curriculum along the ALL Guidelines and to workshops on the National Year 12 Assessment Frameworks. A priority in 1990 is networking between primary, high school and college in specific languages to plan curriculum from K-12.
- **Inservicing in Language Teaching Methodology** for teachers and students of after-school programs, teachers untrained in language teaching methodology or new to Australian schools. This course was offered in 1988-89 in collaboration with the Canberra College of Advanced Education. Another course is planned for late 1990.
- **Promotion of LOTE Programs in Primary Schools.** In 1990 support will be offered for a new primary program in German, as well as for the development of existing programs in Chinese and Spanish.

**Projects funded by the Asian Studies Council**

- **National Curriculum Projects in Thai, senior secondary level.** A draft curriculum has been prepared for Thai, Stages 1-3, together with a set of language teaching videos, a resource kit on Thai songs and units of work for a student work book. Trialling will take place in 1990.

DARWIN
NORTHERN TERRITORY
QUEENSLAND
N
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
BRISBANE
PERTH
ADELAIDE
NEW SOUTH WALES
SYDNEY
CANBERRA
VICTORIA
MELBOURNE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
TASMANIA
HOBART

- **National Curriculum Projects in Korean, senior secondary level.** A draft curriculum has been prepared for Korean, Stage 1, together with a student work book and other resources. A set of language teaching videos is planned for 1990 together with the draft of Stage 2. Trialling is planned for 1990–1991.

## Recent Developments in the Northern Territory

The progressive implementation of NT Policy on Languages Other Than English is well underway.

There is clear evidence that school councils, principals and senior administrators are viewing, in a very positive way, the place of languages (particularly Asian languages) in the school curriculum. The recent national and territory publicity given to the importance of languages has given great impetus to the demand for language education from parents and teachers.

There has been a significant increase in the number of primary and secondary school students learning a language.

In 1989, 7,849 students studied Languages Other than English in 38 primary and 14 secondary schools and colleges – excluding Aboriginal languages being taught in bilingual programs and language as taught in ethnic schools.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | Approximate number of Aboriginal students involved in bilingual programs | | 3 500 |
| B | Students studying in various ethnic schools | | 600 |
| C | Students studying LOTE (excluding A & B) | | 7 849 |
| | Total number of students studying a LOTE | | 11 949 |
| | Total number of school enrolments | 31 597 | |
| | Percentage of students studying LOTE | | 37.8% |

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In the area of Asian languages, the Northern Territory is making a significant contribution on the national scene. Funds have been allocated by the Asian Studies Council for the development of the National Indonesian Language Curriculum Project. This three year project made considerable progress in 1989 and has won wide recognition.

## National Indonesian project

The National Indonesian Language Curriculum Project entered the second of its three year term. The Project team has the task of developing comprehensive curriculum support for teaching the Indonesian language at all levels in Australian primary and secondary schools. The curriculum is being constructed according to the Australian Language Levels (ALL) Guidelines.

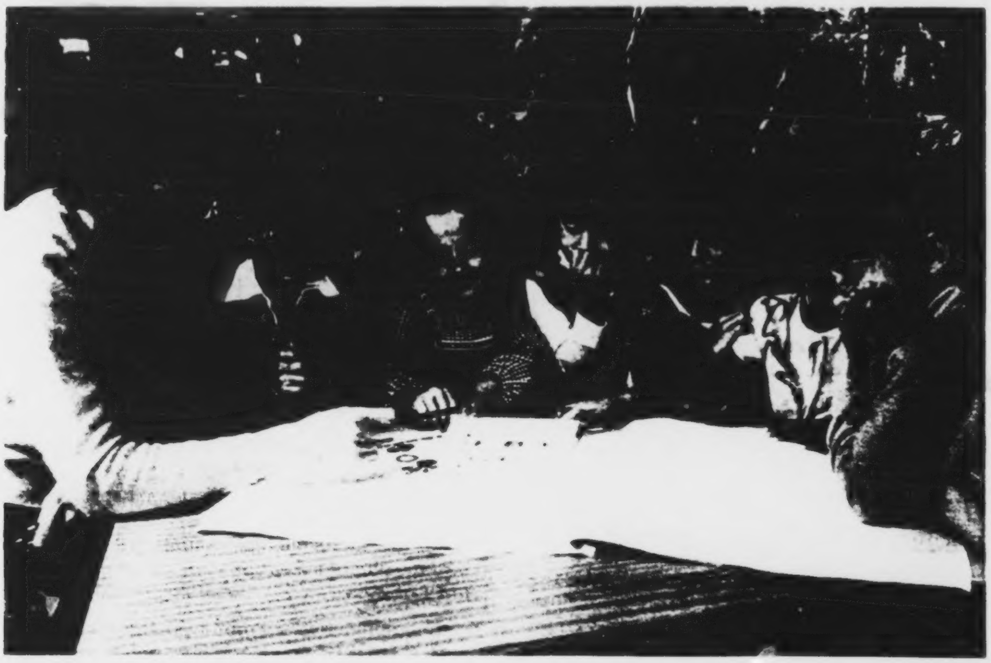
The Project's National Reference Group, which allows all educational systems in Australia to participate in the Project, met in Adelaide during March 1989 and provided the Project Team with useful feedback and advice.

The majority of Indonesian teachers in the Northern Territory were inserviced in Project materials during August, providing feedback and input into future curriculum documents.

A unique feature of the Project is the extent of Indonesian involvement, particularly in the area of consultancies and resource development. Project team members visited different regions in Indonesia at intervals throughout the year to obtain cultural and linguistic information as well as teaching/learning resources for inclusion in the curriculum. Ongoing liaison was maintained with Indonesian educational authorities and institutions regarding the authenticity of language used in the curriculum and the production of audio visual materials for the Resource Pack. Three international schools in Indonesia agreed to trial and respond to the Project's materials. (A school in New Zealand also expressed interest in being involved.)

The Northern Territory Department of Education has also gained Commonwealth funding for the production of Indonesian language curriculum materials for national distance education programs.

One full-time writer has been appointed to prepare an Indonesian Language Distance Education syllabus and resources for upper primary and lower secondary students. ►



Japanese is becoming increasingly popular at all levels of schooling. Primary school class learning Japanese in Canberra. *(Photo courtesy of Curriculum Section ACT Dept. of Education)*

## Professional Development of Teachers

With funds made available by the Asian Studies Council in 1988, nine Territory teachers attended intensive language and culture courses in Indonesia (5), Japan (2) and China (2). During the Christmas vacation, eleven teachers attended intensive language courses in Indonesia (5), Japan (4) and China (2).

Without exception, all teachers involved in intensive Asian language and culture courses in 1988 firmly believe that their fluency in speaking Indonesian, Chinese or Japanese was dramatically improved. Their knowledge of the countries and the cultures concerned was deepened and they feel that it was a most rewarding and enjoyable experience.

### Scholarships for Teachers of Italian 1989–90

Last year two territory teachers, with the assistance of Comitato Italiano Assistenza Scolastica were successful in obtaining study awards during the Christmas vacation.

### Greek-Australia Teacher Exchange Scheme

In 1989 the Greek Government allocated a qualified Greek teacher to work as a resource person and to assist with the Greek language and culture programs at primary and secondary level. This generous offer of the Consulate-General of Greece is very much appreciated.

### Australia-China Education Cooperation Program: 1989/90 Scholarships for Australian Teachers of Chinese

The successful Northern Territory candidate for this one year scholarship is Kay Mitchell, Band 1 teacher from Nhulunbuy High School. Mrs Mitchell is a SACE/ESL Mandarin teacher with a BA in Modern Asian Studies and is now studying in China.

### NT/Indonesian Teacher and Student Exchange Program

A highly successful program involving the exchange of 8 students for 6 months and 4 teachers for one year between schools in the NT and the four eastern Indonesian Provinces of Bali, Nusa Genggara Barat (Lombok and Sumbawa), Nusa Tenggara Timur (Timor and Flores) and Maluku (Ambon).

The scheme developed from a series of short term school visits to the province of Bali 16 years ago and was expanded under the formal agreement of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the two Departments of Education in 1985.

### Interschool Visits and Twinning Arrangements

With the expansion of Indonesian language programs in schools and the proximity of Darwin to Indonesia, an increasing number of NT primary, secondary and Aboriginal schools are arranging annual school excursions to the eastern part of Indonesia.

Many schools have established strong ties with their Indonesian host school. Driver Primary School invited its twin school to visit Darwin to reciprocate the hospitality it had received over various excursions to Kupang and this event was a highlight of 1989.

### Language Centre – Alice Springs

Next year a language centre is to be established in Alice Springs. As well as teaching students from primary and secondary schools in Alice Springs, the centre will provide a resource base for language teachers in the Central Australian Region. The Coordinator for the Centre has been selected and will commence duty at the end of January 1990.

(a) The LOTE area is involved in liaison with and serves on a number of National Reference Committees for the development of National Curriculum Projects, for instance Japanese, Chinese, Thai and Spanish.

(b) Links have been established with the Australia-Japan Foundation, Australia-China Scholarship Scheme, Italian Government education and cultural agencies, National Accrediting Authority for Translators and Interpreters and the National Languages Policy Programs.

(c) Asian Studies Council proposals are aimed at professional development of teachers and proposals and at promoting the development of teaching and learning in Indonesian and other Asian languages in Australia. It is anticipated that these will be first trialled in the Northern Territory for possible implementation in other states.

## Aboriginal Languages

Formal support for Aboriginal languages now extends to twenty one Aboriginal schools. During 1989 eleven of these schools were granted accredited status on the recommendation of the Bilingual Education Consultative Committee (BECC) a subcommittee of FEPPI, the N.T. Education Consultative Group. Currently fifteen bilingual schools have become formally accredited as bilingual schools. The BECC has also established an ongoing program of moderated school-based self-appraisal to ensure the improvement of standards. Through working with Regional Departmental officers, this program became part of the Action Plan for School Improvement process.

A new industrial award for Literacy Workers has recognised the importance of a career path for this category of bilingual specialist staff. Career advancement is based on completion of accredited courses at the School of Linguistics at Batchelor College.

The Aboriginal Languages Subcommittee of the Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Subject Area Committee, which is now based at Batchelor College, is developing a resource book to assist development of Aboriginal language programs.

It is too early to assess the full effect of current developments. There is, however, considerable evidence that the Northern Territory is playing a major role in the implementation of the recommendations of the National Policy on Languages.

## Teaching English as a Second Language

The NT Education Department provides services for developing the English language competence of students of migrant and Aboriginal non-English speaking backgrounds through specialist officers based in the Curriculum and Assessment Branch and a network of specialist officers and teachers in Schools North Branch and Operations South.

For new arrivals to Australia, two intensive English units continue to cater for migrant students at primary and secondary levels, and provide a comprehensive learning program across all curriculum areas. Specialist ESL teachers, appointed as above-formula staff also assist ESL learners in mainstream classes in urban schools.

Curriculum involvement this year has included the development of an ESL perspective for the Approved English Curriculum being developed. ESL officers have assisted in writing sections of the curriculum, and units of work with an ESL focus have been trialled in mainstream classes.

The senior accredited course General English 3 was implemented during 1989. This course may be taken by students as preparation for SSABSA (Senior Secondary Assessment Board of S.A.) ESL courses.

Inservice sessions for general classroom teachers and specialist ESL staff have focused on whole-school approaches including English Language Development Across the Curriculum (ELDAC), Cooperative Planning Programming and Teaching (CPPT) and further inservice on the Social Literacy Project.

At the national level, Departmental ESL staff were involved in:

- ACTA/ATESOL Summer School, Sydney, January 1989;
- National Conference, Across the Borders: Language at the Interface, convened by the Australian Reading Association/Australian Association for the Teaching of English (ARA/AATE), and hosted the Reading Association of the NT/English Teaching Association of the NT (RANT/ETANT) and the NT Education Department, June/July 1989;
- Workshop on Assessment of English Proficiency in Students of Non-English Speaking Background, organised by Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education (AACLAME), August 1989, in Canberra;
- National Multicultural Education Reference Group Meeting, organised by AACLAME, August 1989, in Sydney;
- National K-12 ESL Materials Coordination Project (DEET), with State/Territory representatives on the National Reference group meeting in February 1990, in Canberra.
- Language in Education Conference, Murdoch University, December 1989.

## Aboriginal Education – English Language Development

Aboriginal students in NT comprise more than a quarter of the total school population. Most aboriginal students learn English as a second language and a significant proportion learn English as a second dialect.

As well as two curriculum officers, staffing includes two regional Education Officers, and provision for 15 regional ESL Coordinators, Aboriginal Education. These regional staff members provide advisory support for teachers of Aboriginal students in urban and Aboriginal community schools.

The ESL curriculum for Aboriginal schools is presently being reviewed and linked with the proposed NT Approved Curriculum. The development of an ESL package for Aboriginal schools will include input from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff; ESL curriculum staff are also involved in ongoing liaison with FEPPI, and Batchelor College.

Major tasks for primary levels in 1989 have included:

- preliminary writing, ESL Curriculum Package for Aboriginal Schools;
- collection of texts written by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal authors;
- revision of Homeland Centres curriculum, School of the Bush, Levels 1,2,3 (54 fortnightly guides containing teacher notes and student activities);
- publishing of PeeWee Series and Jazz Chants. ►

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ESL staff have established liaison with teachers supervising Aboriginal ESL students enrolled with the NT Secondary Correspondence School.

For Community Education Centres, English language development has been programmed for Aboriginal students to upgrade skills in two courses, Foundation Studies Certificate Course and General Studies Certificate Course. Opportunities for students' further development will be provided in two courses presently being developed, the Vocational Studies Certificate Course and the Initial Secondary Certificate. These two courses will be presented for accreditation by TAFEAC and also referred to the Board of Studies.

Inservice for 1989 has included TESL Inservice for ESL Officers and Coordinators, Darwin (March), ESL Curriculum Inservice, Barkly Region (May), and Inservice for Outstation/Homeland Centre Teachers, Ti-Tree (May). Regions have also conducted their own inservice courses, arranged by regional ESL staff.

# Funding for ASLLP* General Element in 1990 – NT Department of Education

## Brief description

The program is the continuation of the ASLL Program which commenced in 1988/1989. The project is to expand and improve the teaching of the Indonesian Language in NT Primary Schools by continuing to make available to each of five primary schools the part-time services of a fully qualified teacher of Indonesian.

Primary schools and teachers involved in teaching Indonesian in these schools are part of a network of Pilot Schools that has been established to trial the National Indonesian Curriculum Project currently being developed by the Northern Territory and South Australian Department of Education.

The cooperation and enthusiasm which have been forthcoming from parents, principals and teachers of the pilot schools have been most encouraging. As a result, the same level of funding as in 1988/89 will be allocated in 1990 to the Indonesian Language, namely $54 000.

For 1990, the remainder of the $91 000 available from the NT Dept of Education for ASLLP will be used for the half-time employment of a teacher of Japanese, the half-time employment of a teacher of Italian and for curriculum materials development to support a range of languages (Greek, German, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Chinese and French).

At present, there are Italian language programs in a number of primary schools, but no opportunity for students to continue their studies into secondary school. The provision of a teacher of Italian on 0.5 basis to two secondary schools/colleges, in addition to normal staffing for a number of years, should see student numbers build up sufficiently to create a situation where the schools are willing to provide for a teacher within their staffing allocation.

For 1990 funds will be used to continue employment of a teacher of Japanese half-time. Last year provision was made for a full-time Japanese teacher. This year the school is absorbing 0.5 of this teacher of Japanese within its staffing allocation.

The languages selected for support through curriculum and professional development are those which will benefit through infusion of some funds to improve the quality of second language programs, to extend the courses and to cater for more students.

The cost for the programs in the 1990's:

1. $54 000 as part of 2.5 full-time equivalent salaries and oncosts for Band 1 teachers.
2. $13 500 Band 1, A1 Category 0.5 salary for Japanese language teacher.
3. $13 500 Band 1, A1 Category 0.5 salary for Italian language teacher.
4. Curriculum and professional development

| | |
|---|---|
| Greek | $ 1 670 |
| Portuguese | 1 666 |
| French | 1 666 |
| Vietnamese | 1 666 |
| Chinese | 1 666 |
| German | 1 666 |
| | 10 000 |

The NT Department of Education accepts the accountability requirements as contained in the ASLLP Draft Guidelines for 1990 LOTE Programs.

The NT continues to expand its own support for second language teaching. The most notable expansion from the beginning of 1990 will be the Alice Springs Language Centre which will employ a total of four staff and offer a range of teaching in four languages to all schools in the town.

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*Australian Second Language Learning Program

Aboriginal children in the NT often have the chance to learn their home languages at school. Children at Yipirinya School in Alice Springs may learn Arrernte, Luritja and Warlpiri. *(Photo courtesy of Australian Information Service)*

## Future prospects

The NT Department of Education is extremely optimistic about the future of LOTE in NT schools. If the current momentum of publicity regarding the importance of LOTE continues through the National Languages Policy and the NT LOTE Policy the future of LOTE can only improve across primary, secondary and tertiary education. Expected outcomes of this policy are:

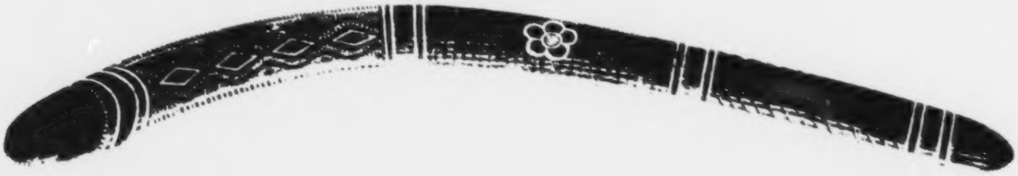
a) The progressive introduction of LOTE into primary and secondary schools such that by 1998 almost all students in that year will have studied LOTE.

b) The provision of high quality LOTE programs that provide for student entry, initially at years 6 and 7 in primary schools and in years 8 and 9 in secondary schools. Once introduced, extension to years below and above should be encouraged.

c) The promotion and expansion of the teaching of priority languages – Aboriginal, Indonesian, Chinese, Japanese, Greek and Italian.

d) The development of curriculum resources through participation in national curriculum projects and department-initiated projects.

e) Provision of a competent teaching force to meet the increased demand for LOTE.



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# Language and Trade:

## A review of the LOTE* needs of the Australian economy – a report designed and commissioned by AACLAME

by ***John Stanley***

> This article describes the findings of a recent survey and report[1] which examined the importance of LOTE skills in the establishment of our export culture and the extent to which Australian companies regarded LOTE skills as important for their exporting activities.

### Future directions of the Australian economy

It has become commonplace to regard Australia's major economic problems of the 80's and 90's as a deteriorating balance of trade and a massive growth in external debt. This trend has put in jeopardy all Australia's economic activity not to speak of the funds available for the public sectors of education, health, etc.

Australia accounts for only 1% of World trade and has a very limited penetration of overseas markets.

> In 1988 Australia was supplying only 3.5% of the $33bn South Korea import market, 3% of $43bn Chinese import market, 1.4% of the $35.4bn Hong Kong import market and 5% of the Japanese $128bn market.[2]

Australia's economic performance has been limited by this failure to export. Its ratio of merchandise exports to GDP at 13.5% is below that of comparable industrial countries, and according to the Hughes Committee report should be closer to 19%.[3]

Compounding the problem is Australia's dependence on the export of agricultural and mineral products rather than manufactures and services.

It is a noticeable feature of the monolingual Anglo-Saxon members of the OECD that the last two decades have seen a decline in their trade balance in manufactures. Australia is outstanding in this respect. An Australian Manufacturing Council (AMC) report[4] noted that the list of Australia's 500 largest exporters contains only 200 in manufacturing that are not based on mining or agriculture. Of those 200 only 12 have exports of more than $60m.

In the last decade the Asian region, most notably Japan, has become the recipient of a higher percentage of Australia's exports. However there is little cause for congratulation. As the Garnaut report[5] emphasises, this trend simply reflects the high complementarity between resource rich Australia and resource poor industrial northeast Asia. Our success in expanding our exports to northeast Asia between 1965 and 1987 may lie in the fact that Japan targeted Australia as a supplier rather than Australia looking to Japan as a market. The commodity composition of Australia's exports matched Japan's import needs more closely than any other trading partner. The value added element of Australia's exports to Japan is relatively low.

> In the important trade categories of chemicals, manufactures, machinery and transport equipment – where value added is higher – Australia's 1987–88 trade deficit with Sweden was $655m and a massive $2 181m for West Germany.[6] As the AMC study noted, it is Australia's failure to successfully produce and export manufactured goods which is at the heart of the trade problem.

### The Survey: objectives and method.

The major objective of the survey was to establish whether businesses actually saw LOTE skills as relevant to their activities. Unless business itself perceives a deficiency, an increased supply of LOTE skills may not be taken up. Or it may be the case that LOTE skills can only be absorbed into the economy if embedded in a package of other business and technical skills.

The sample chosen for the survey consisted of 2 000 companies from Austrade's data base of 6 000 exporters. Companies were chosen from industry sectors to include 1 200 from the manufacturing sec-

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*Language other than English

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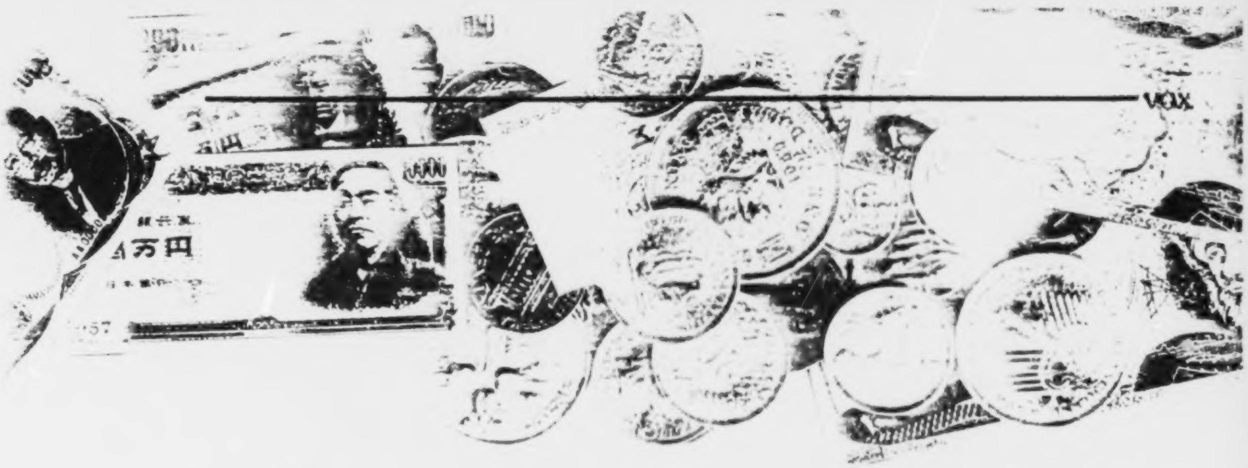

tor and 800 companies approximately equally distributed among the 3 sectors mining, rural industries and fishing, and services. Of the 2 000 to whom the questionnaire was sent, 451 replied, of which 433 indicated numbers employed. While the range of number of employees was wide (up to 50 000 in 1 case), 50% of companies had less than 50 employees, 75% had under 200 employees and 90% had less than 500. In terms of annual turnover the questionnaire was directed at companies within the range $500 000 to $25 million.

While recent changes in the status of companies on Austrade's listing made it difficult to ensure that all companies fell within the specifications given, it was considered important that the survey should be weighted towards the small and medium sized end of the spectrum. The organization and operating style of large companies are different from those of small and middle-sized. Frequently they are controlled from outside Australia and are not interested in exporting from their Australian base. Many of the larger companies, such as Qantas and B.H.P., because of their established international orientation, already recognise the importance of LOTE skills and have the resources to undertake staff training. However Australian industry is dominated by smaller companies, particularly in manufacturing, and it is in this sector where the failure to export is most acute.

The items on the questionnaire were therefore designed to elicit the attitudes of predominantly small to medium sized companies to the need for LOTE skills. The survey results tended to confirm that companies at this end of the size spectrum regard exporting as the minor part of their operations and case studies of successful Australian exporters such as the Australian Export Award Winners[7] are studies of an exceptional few.

Thus, of the 451 companies that indicated the percentage of their exports to non-English speaking countries (NESC), 20% indicated nil exports, just over 50% exported less than 5%, 70% exported less than 15%.

Internationalization has been described as a gradual process in which firms go through the stages

Language is an essential tool for successful trade. Here representatives of agricultural trading countries meet in Cairns, Queensland. *(Photo courtesy of Australian Information Services)*

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of 'Partially interested firm', 'Exploring firm', 'Experimental exporter', 'Experienced small exporter', 'Experienced large exporter'.[8] For the respondents to our survey, the export percentages given above would tend to indicate that many are still at the Experimental stage. This position tends also to be reflected in their attitude to LOTE skills. Few companies have had sufficient experience to be able to correctly evaluate the importance of LOTE skills.

A frequent response to both our written questionnaire and our telephone survey was that English was the language of international trade and 'they all speak English anyway'. This is a major fallacy. Here the distinction made by Holden[9] between languages of market contact and languages of market value is useful. English is the outstanding language for making initial communication with the overseas market. However, as our survey showed, there are for Australia at least 9 other languages which, like English, serve as languages of marketing value. By marketing value is meant languages which have value because they perform a number of functions such as generating new scientific and technical information and facilitating commercial and technical exchange on an international or supranational basis. The languages which the firms surveyed regarded as most important for their present marketing activity were Japanese, Mandarin, Arabic, Indonesian, Korean, Thai, Spanish, German and French.

Before examining survey responses in further detail it is necessary to draw attention to the considerable methodological problems that were involved even in what was an exploratory survey.

In this area Australia lags a long way behind other OECD countries. The U.K. commenced its first major survey on the language needs of companies in 1972.[10] Such survey work is not in any sense straightforward. Schröder,[11] deploring the lack of trilinguals in Germany refers to the field as rather intricate, and Hagen's 12 year survey[12] of the need for LOTES in Northern English industry indicates a task of considerable length.

Methodologically there are two main approaches. One is to estimate the number of personnel actively using LOTE skills in the successful exporting companies and compare them with the numbers using LOTE skills in the unsuccessful companies. To a limited extent this had already been done in the survey of Australian Export Award Winners 1987, over a relatively small sample of companies. This data indicated that:

'Twenty-four of the 35 finalists (68.6%) employed people who were fluent in one or more of Japanese, Chinese, Arabic or French compared with 63 (32.1%) of the 196 non-finalists ... The finalists employed 199 people fluent in these languages, or an average of 5.7 staff members for each company. The non-finalists employed a total of 273, an average of 1.4 staff members for each company. The average finalist therefore employed 4 times as many people fluent in these languages as the average non-finalist'.

The same kind of data is available from the U.K., U.S., Europe and Japan. Why is such data largely ignored by the Australian business community?

The attempt to answer this question requires an elicitation of the attitudes of the business community to LOTE skills. This provides the second main approach and the one taken in this survey.

As has been found elsewhere, eliciting business opinion on the value of LOTE skills is complex. Reeves (1985)[13] observes of a U.K. 1984 survey:

> But rather more significant was the persisting deep divide in all trade towards the fundamental importance of LOTES for exporting. The industrial and commercial sectors represented by the two groups were largely similar or indeed identical. Yet there were even cases of rival companies taking dramatically opposed views on the value of languages. The second group which was by definition committed to some form of language training, regarded the resultant capability without exception as indispensable for their success.

## The Survey: results

In the survey discussed here, among the main questions directed at eliciting company attitudes were:

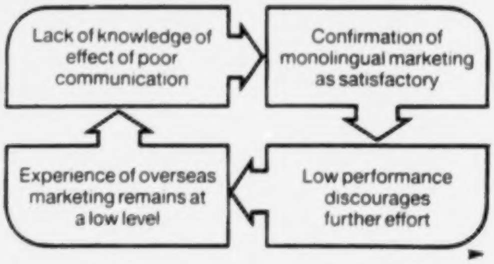
1. How often do you or your employees need foreign languages in your job?
2. Has a lack of foreign language skills among employees in the areas listed negatively affected your company's trading activity?
3. When recruiting employees do you take into account their foreign language skills?
4. When fixing employees' salaries do you take into account their foreign language skills?

All of the above questions were applicable to five areas of activity as shown on the next page. Responses are indicated.

|  | STAFF |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Management | Marketing | Personnel | Technical | Secretarial |
|  | Percentage of companies returning questionnaire |  |  |  |  |
| **Question 1** |  |  |  |  |  |
| No response | 29 | 30 | 37 | 34 | 33 |
| Never | 27 | 21 | 32 | 35 | 47 |
| Occasionally | 35 | 34 | 9 | 25 | 17 |
| Frequently | 6 | 11 | 2 | 5 | 2 |
| Continually | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Question 2** |  |  |  |  |  |
| No response | 30 | 32 | 38 | 36 | 35 |
| Never | 42 | 36 | 55 | 46 | 54 |
| Occasionally | 25 | 27 | 6 | 15 | 9 |
| Frequently | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Continually | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| **Question 3** |  |  |  |  |  |
| No response | 31 | 31 | 35 | 33 | 33 |
| Never | 46 | 36 | 54 | 48 | 51 |
| Occasionally | 16 | 22 | 8 | 13 | 12 |
| Usually | 3 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Always | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| **Question 4** |  |  |  |  |  |
| No response | 31 | 32 | 35 | 34 | 34 |
| Always | 5 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Sometimes | 11 | 15 | 7 | 10 | 8 |
| Never | 52 | 47 | 55 | 52 | 54 |

There are a few surprises in the above responses. One would intuitively expect both management and marketing to have most overseas contacts, taking into account the fact that most firms in our sample tended to see exporting as a minor, hence non-routine operation, i.e. the atypicality of export activity requires special managerial supervision. Thus not enough firms have a sufficient quantity of export business to create a large demand for bilingual secretaries. It is possible that when exports become a more significant proportion of the middle and smaller sized companies' activities, as in the U.K., then the findings of Morris (1980)[14] and Hurman (1982)[15] of greater job opportunities for bilingual secretaries than for any other job category involving language in industry, might be confirmed.

From the data derived from the above questions one might conclude that among the business community at large the attitude toward the need for LOTES is one of indifference. This attitude seems related to the relatively unimportant role played by exports in their business activities and hence the very limited perceptions and experience businessmen have of the impact of a lack of communication skills on their activities. A vicious circle seems to operate.


Lack of knowledge of effect of poor communication
Confirmation of monolingual marketing as satisfactory
Low performance discourages further effort
Experience of overseas marketing remains at a low level

As noted earlier the experience of other countries runs counter to the low value attached to LOTE skills by Australian businessmen. To give one example from a survey of 115 foreign companies in Beijing:

> . . . the Japanese executive is given more encouragement to learn Chinese than any foreign executive. Indeed, 87% of Japanese companies agreed that it is important for the chief representative or senior manager to speak Chinese well.[16]

Examples confirming the importance of LOTE skills in business and industry are numerous in European and U.S. management literature. Generally they have had little impact on the Australian scene. The results of the survey discussed in this article would indicate that businessmen see only a tenuous connection between LOTE skills and overseas business performance.

## Business perceptions of the problems of international trade

In the survey respondents were also asked to rank the items below as factors that would inhibit them exporting to NESC.

| | Position |
|---|---|
| Lack of financial incentives | 2 |
| Distance from Australia | 6 |
| Lack of knowledge of foreign markets | 1 |
| Lack of staff with knowledge of relevant language | 9 |
| Import duties | 5 |
| Too many rules & regulations | 4 |
| Packaging, labelling & distribution problems | 7 |
| Marketing and product/service promotion | 3 |
| Inadequate product/service e.g. product design compared with competitors | 8 |

The rankings are indicated on the right and coincide in respect of the importance of LOTES with findings of a similar survey carried out by Price Waterhouse.[17] That is to say, *lack of staff with LOTE skills* is regarded as of low significance, but items relying heavily on LOTE skills such as *knowledge of foreign markets, and marketing and product service promotion* are ranked high.

This is the central contradiction of the survey. Businessmen recognize that they have considerable communication difficulties in gathering market intelligence and effectively promoting their product overseas. At the same time they consider knowledge of the relevant foreign language of little significance.

We can attribute this paradox to what is essentially a weakness in Australian management education. Company management on the whole lacks the capacity to see the importance of effective communications. As the Hughes report observed:[18]

> Education for managers is limited in Australia and particularly limited in relation to export promotion. Few Australian managers have specialised training in exports. Few courses are available, particularly at a high level. Foreign language training capacity for export managers is lacking. Immigrants provide most of the linguists for Australian exports, mainly fortuitously.

## Future language needs

The most comprehensive survey of educational provision for LOTEs has been that undertaken by the Ingleson report.[19] That report, though limited to Asian studies, offers a litany of weaknesses in the current provision for LOTEs training in Australia. The remedies will require not just the introduction of more communicative methodologies, but radical institutional change. For example the traditional degree pattern of 3 years at 5 to 8 hours per week is nearly 5 times below the level of intensity required to achieve basic proficiency in Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Arabic. As Ingleson argues there is a strong case for LOTE training in Asian languages being compressed into more intensive programs over shorter total periods of time but including up to a year in-country. Another radical change would be the development of courses which combine LOTE training with training in business and technology. Both the above imply a restructuring in the way language training departments function and relate to other discipline areas, and the way other disciplines particularly business perceive their international communication needs.

In the last two or three years a number of Australian educational institutions have begun to change their approach to LOTE training in the directions noted above. Language courses are being

Many countries exhibit their wares at the International Trade Centre in Melbourne *(Photo courtesy of Australian Information Service)*

developed jointly with courses in other disciplines, more students are spending time in-country and so forth. Yet these processes of change come belatedly to Australia. In Europe the importance of LOTEs in trade and technology has been recognised in both public and private sectors for nearly two decades.

It is interesting to note however, that whether in Europe, the U.S. or Japan the private sector has proved more able than public sector institutions to provide the kind of specific, intensive language training requested by business and industry. It remains to be seen if the public sector in Australia can meet the requirements of the Australian economy for needs based language teaching.

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# Conference Interpreting

by ***Katja Berger***

Australia's isolated geographical position has always influenced its economic standing as compared to the rest of the world. With international technological advancement and the increase in tourism to 'countries off the beaten track', not to mention the greater availability of air travel, Australia has become a popular investment and tourist destination. Similarly, overseas organisations and companies have become increasingly interested in Australia as a conference destination and this interest has led to a greater demand for language services at these functions.

Over the past decade the number of international conferences requiring interpreting or translation services has gradually increased to an annual average, in the past five years, of twenty conferences. These conferences usually require interpreting services for a duration of one to twelve days, with the traditional conference languages – namely French and, to a lesser extent, Spanish – still dominating the field. Occasionally European languages are requested because the Conference has *traditionally* offered these languages at previous assignments – which have been held in Europe – and the conference host does not wish to break with tradition, even though the actual need may not be great. The demand for Asian languages – in particular Japanese, but also Mandarin – has grown considerably in the past years and the conference market shows that this real demand will continue to grow. Languages such as Russian and Arabic are certainly requested by certain conference hosts, however they tend to be required at meetings which directly or specifically involve these countries (e.g. trade negotiations between Australia and the Soviet Union).

Australia's growth in popularity as a conference destination has resulted in the birth of tertiary level interpreting and translation courses as well as private institutions teaching foreign languages. Organisations and Associations such as the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters and AUSIT aim at defining the role and quality of all language services, ranging from court to simultaneous interpreting. Proximity – or rather, lack of it – to

Simultaneous interpreting facilitates communication between delegates at an Australia-Japan ministerial meeting in Canberra. *(Photo: The Canberra Times)*

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foreign countries is no longer a hindrance to those students wishing to learn languages. Foreign countries have, so to speak, come to Australia in the form of nationals who have decided to immigrate to Australia. As a multicultural society which now also has excellent language education institutions, we have the vital prerequisites for supplying the international conference industry with locally-based, trained interpreters and translators.

In 1988, the year of Australia's Bicentenary, we have had the opportunity to put to the test the balance of 'demand and supply' regarding interpreting and translation services. Over seventy international meetings requiring simultaneous interpreting chose Australia as their conference destination.

Most of these conferences employed the language services of Australian-based interpreters; however, approximately five world conferences either brought their own interpreters with them, assuming that the resources were not adequate here, or, unfortunately, were advised to 'import' interpreters from Europe and Asia.

As an example of the greater workload the industry here experienced, our company alone was required to provide six language teams (each consisting of approximately six Australian-based interpreters) for one November week of conferences and meetings around Australia. Two of these November conferences were the *7th International Congress of State Lotteries and 13th Conference of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions and Similar Organisations* (IOSCO) in Melbourne.

The State Lotteries Congress took place in the conference rooms of the Melbourne Regent Hotel. There were approximately 500 international delegates, over forty of whom came from French and Spanish-speaking countries. Prior to congress commencement we were requested to translate a number of the papers into the official Congress languages, English, French and Spanish. At the actual Congress six simultaneous interpreters worked a total of seven days from 0830-1700 hours; after obligatory session and lunch breaks, this amounted to approximately 6-7 intensive working hours daily. At IOSCO, two teams – each consisting of eight simultaneous interpreters – were required for concurrent sessions over a period of five days. The languages required were English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

Of particular interest in Sydney in February, 1988 was the *2nd World Congress on Vocational Training* held at the Hyatt Kingsgate Hotel, in conjunction with the *29th International Youth Skill Olympics*, held at various TAFE Colleges and Darling Harbour. This Congress provided a unique forum to promote international awareness of skill development issues and enabled vocational training practitioners to meet their international counterparts and contribute to the world-wide debate on the importance of skill formation as a strategy for economic and social development. At the Youth Skill Olympics, 450 of the world's leading young skilled workers from Europe, Asia and the Americas gathered at the Sydney Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour to compete at the Olympics for four days. For the three days of the Congress our company supplied between eight simultaneous and twenty four consecutive interpreters. The languages required were English, French, Portuguese and Spanish. Our company supplied teams of translators and bilingual typists as well as over 20 consecutive interpreters for the days prior to and during the Youth Skill Olympics. The Ethnic Affairs Commission of N.S.W. also supplied a number of consecutive interpreters as their contribution to this valuable community event.

Interpreters demonstrate their equipment in an interpreting booth. *(Photo courtesy Conference Interpreting Services)*

This enormous requirement for, and supply of, interpreter and translation services was an excellent indication of the large number of local resources in the language field which we have available here in Australia, and the success of 1988 is certainly proof that we no longer have to look to our overseas colleagues for assistance in this field.

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*Ms Katja Berger is the Manager of the Conference Interpreting Service (Language division, Tour Hosts)*

# The Australian Language Levels Project – ALL Good Things Must Come to an End

The key issues in languages education are the issues of access, choice, and excellence. It is the third of these, the issue of excellence in the delivery of programs (in languages other than English and ESL), and excellence in learner outcomes that the ALL Project has attempted to address over the past five years.

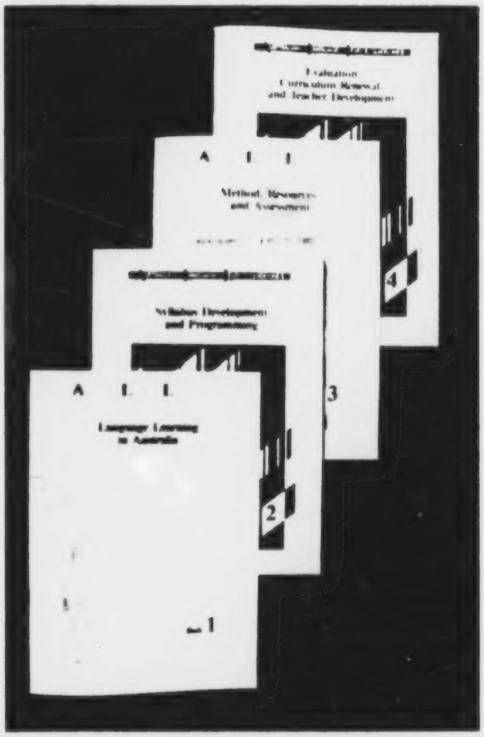
This article takes the form of a report from a project which is nearing the end of its life. The Australian Language Levels (ALL) Project was funded initially as a 'project of national significance' by the Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra, and the South Australian Education Department. The Project, currently funded by AACLAME through the national component of ASLLP, has been in operation now for five years, and is due to come to an end in June 1990. The major goal of the ALL Project has always been to improve the teaching and learning of languages (Languages other than English initially, and subsequently also English as a Second Language) in Australian schools. To achieve this goal, a set of guidelines sufficiently flexible to enable them to apply to all languages, all year levels (K-12), and all states and territories was to be prepared. Their publication was to be followed by an intensive inservice program in all states and territories. As the project comes to an end it is evident that this goal and much more has been achieved.

## The *Australian Language Levels (ALL) Guidelines*

The *ALL Guidelines* were published by the Curriculum Development Centre in mid-1988, successful sales leading to a reprinting soon after. This has almost sold out and a third printing is being considered. The *ALL Guidelines* comprise a set of four books entitled:

*Language Learning in Australia*
*Syllabus Development and Programming*
*Method, Resources, and Assessment*
*Evaluation, Curriculum Renewal, and Teacher Development*

They were prepared for a wide audience including not only classroom teachers, but also advisers, consultants, pre- and inservice educators, curriculum writers, educational administrators, and assessment authorities Australia-wide. Since they were developed within a strong structure of collaboration with teachers and languages personnel (including ESL) representing all educational systems, states, and territories in Australia, the *ALL Guidelines* can claim to represent a 'common basis of understanding' for the teaching and learning of languages in this country. The Project is also attracting considerable interest overseas.



The *ALL Guidelines* also represent a synthesis of current thinking in the languages teaching field. The writing team has consisted of experienced classroom teachers who, with the help of specialist consultants and the continual advice and support of a national reference group, were able to integrate their own and others' teaching experience with the latest available research in languages curriculum design and applied linguistics. The result is an innovative activities-based approach to language teaching and learning, supported by a consistent and comprehensive guidelines document, written specifically for the current Australian context.

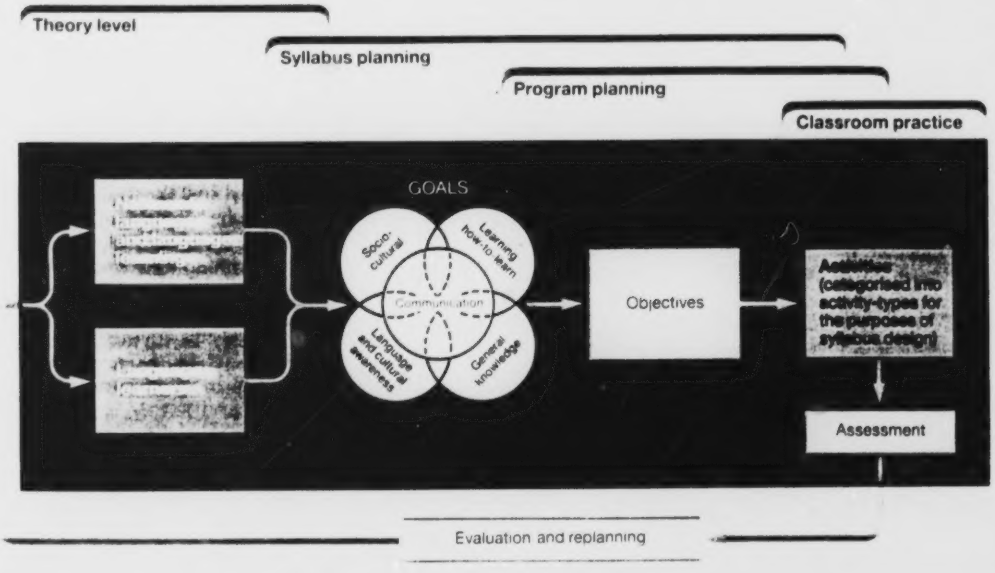
## Cave omnia

The work of the ALL Project team has been well received and has also been, by any standards, successful. The team is happy about the contribution it has been able to make over the last five years to the teaching and learning of languages in Australia. At the same time the team welcomes the healthy and fundamental debate that has been generated about the appropriateness of, for example, its proposed activities-based approach or its organisational Framework of Stages. The languages field always has been and always will be a complex and constantly developing one, and the work of the Project team needs to be viewed in this context. It is doubtful whether any single document, set of guidelines, method, approach, or whatever can ever provide the ultimate solution to the how, why, when, and where of language teaching and learning. Although the *ALL Guidelines* have been recognised as making a major contribution to the teaching and learning of languages in Australia, their authors do not claim that they are the 'final word' on the subject. If languages practitioners and administrators are debating professional issues, the ALL team takes heart in the knowledge that it might well have provided the catalyst for some of the debate.

## National training and development

Inservice of the *ALL Guidelines* began early when reactions to the draft materials were sought from practising teachers, key languages personnel, and specialist consultants. The publication of the books brought a further wave of inservice activities where the team provided seminars and workshops on the ALL curriculum model, viz. syllabus development and programming, method, resources, assessment, and evaluation, to all systems, states, and territories. Literally hundreds of primary and secondary teachers in all parts of the country have experienced an ALL inservice program in activities which have ranged from a short one and a half hour session to an intensive inservice of five days' duration. The demand for this training and development service has continued to increase and the point has now been reached where requests for inservice are totally beyond the team's capacity to meet them. In order to satisfy these continuing demands in a different way, the ALL team is currently developing an *Inservice Manual* which will be available later in 1990 for individuals or groups (with the help of pre- and inservice educators) to examine the major principles of ALL as a basis for reviewing and renewing their current practice. A process of continual renewal is thus estab-

**Figure 1:** Framework showing the relationship between language, language learners, and syllabus development


Theory level
Syllabus planning
Program planning
Classroom practice
GOALS
Socio-cultural
Learning how-to-learn
Communication
Language and cultural awareness
General knowledge
Objectives
Activities (categorised into activity-types for the purposes of syllabus design)
Assessment
Evaluation and replanning

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lished so that the quality of programs is improved. The manual will contain workshop guides covering key curriculum issues in languages, viz:

- Planning the learning
  - principles to guide the teaching/learning process, and methodological implications
  - the goals of language learning
  - 'activities' and exercises
  - lessons and units
  - 'modules' and syllabuses
  - resources
- Methods (the teaching/learning process)
  - principles
  - individualisation
  - classroom observation
  - mixed-ability and mixed-background classes
  - classroom techniques and strategies
  - classroom organisation
- Assessment
  - issues, trends, purposes, a definition
  - what to assess
  - how to assess
  - judging performance
  - recording and reporting
- Evaluating the curriculum
  - developing evaluation strategies
  - evaluating the various pieces of the 'curriculum jigsaw'
  - managing the languages department in the context of curriculum renewal

## A generic model

The *ALL Guidelines* have provided a generic or framework model for further curriculum development. The Australian context for language teaching demands that a framework be able to cater for a range of languages (there are currently 35-40 languages being assessed at Year 12 level, for example), a range of language learners, and a range of program provisions. In addition to the National Policy on Languages, each system, state, and territory tends to have its own particular languages policy, and each classroom has its own particular context and its own particular group of learners. The ALL curriculum model is proving to be successful as a framework in this context of diversity because of two of its major features, viz. its flexibility and its provision of a 'Framework of Stages':

***Flexibility:*** The model deals with curriculum design in a consistent way, from goals through to assessment, and possesses a basic integrity and comprehensiveness into which the needs and demands of particular learners, programs, languages, and policies can be built. The ultimate key to the model's flexibility however is the teacher, who, with detailed guidance from the framework (but without prescription), plays a pivotal part in determining and meeting the needs of his/her particular group of learners within the constraints of the particular teaching situation.

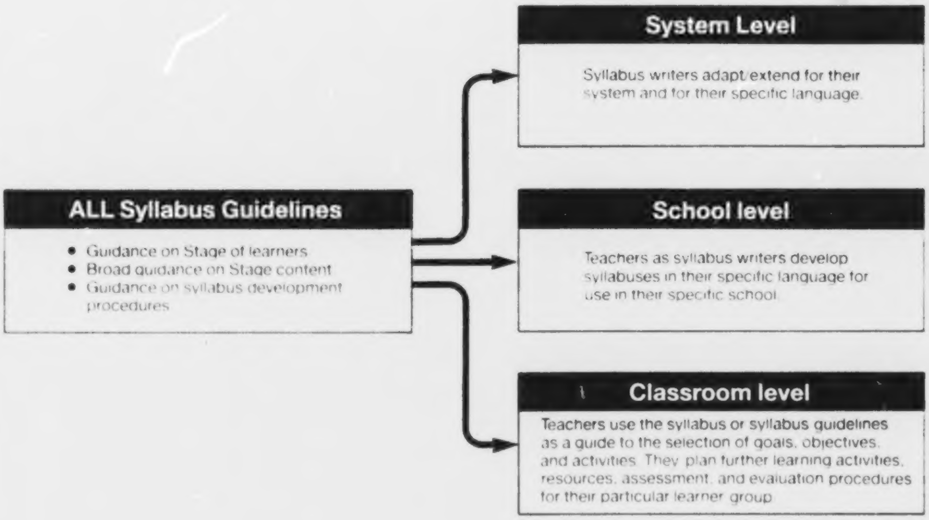
***Framework of Stages:*** The ALL Framework of Stages provides teachers and curriculum writers across languages and in different contexts with a common reference point and an organisational model for the rationalisation of learner groups.

## National curriculum and syllabus development based on the *ALL Guidelines*

A range of curriculum projects is currently being developed in the language area, all broadly following the generic model set out in the *ALL Guidelines*. The ALL team itself has developed a set of *Italian Framework Syllabuses* (K-12), covering Stages A-C, B-D,1,2,3,4, and 5 of the Framework of Stages. These framework syllabuses set out the 'essential learning', goals, and objectives for each Stage. They also provide at each Stage exemplary 'modules' depicting the content of the learning, and an assessment scheme with criteria for judging performance. The syllabuses were developed as a model to demonstrate the application of the generic curriculum model to a particular language.

ALL-based projects are developing curricula in specific languages at both national and state levels. Key national projects include the National Indonesian Language Curriculum Project (being developed jointly by the NT and SA), the National Japanese Language Curriculum Project (being developed by WA and Queensland), the National Chinese Project (Victoria), the National Vietnamese Project (SA), and national projects in Spanish and senior secondary Thai and Korean (ACT). These projects demonstrate the way in which individual states have taken responsibility for national curriculum development. This itself is something new and no mean achievement, given the history of curriculum development in Australia. In a developmental sense, each of these projects is also 'bench testing' the *ALL Guidelines* in a language-specific context. Materials from the key national projects are due to be ready for publication at the end of 1990. In addition, the *National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level (NAFLSSL)*, being developed under the aegis of the Senior Secondary Assessment board of SA (SSABSA), shares the same fundamental curriculum design as that of the ALL Project. The ALL team has provided consultancy

**Figure 3:** Possible pathways for the use of the ALL syllabus guidelines



**ALL Syllabus Guidelines**

- Guidance on Stage of learners
- Broad guidance on Stage content
- Guidance on syllabus development procedures

**System Level**

Syllabus writers adapt/extend for their system and for their specific language.

**School level**

Teachers as syllabus writers develop syllabuses in their specific language for use in their specific school.

**Classroom level**

Teachers use the syllabus or syllabus guidelines as a guide to the selection of goals, objectives, and activities. They plan further learning activities, resources, assessment, and evaluation procedures for their particular learner group.

support to each of these projects as well as to the numerous state curriculum initiatives which are also based on the *ALL Guidelines*.

The experience which has been gained through the application of the generic *ALL Guidelines* to specific languages will be documented by the team in the shape of a *Manual For Curriculum Developers*. This manual will provide syllabus developers with guidance on such curriculum design issues as selecting, grading, and sequencing content; integrating learning experiences; designing assessment schemes; and other language-specific issues.

## The ESL ALL Project

The number of requests that the team has received for inservice training in ESL is indicative of the continuing interest that the ESL ALL Project is attracting. The team has taken advantage of these inservice opportunities not only to inform the field about the ESL ALL nexus, but also as a means of testing ideas with classroom teachers.

Stage Descriptions for each of the K-12 Stages of the ESL Framework of Stages have been developed. They outline suggested goals, objectives, activities, and content for each phase of schooling. The detailed drafts have been disseminated widely to all states, territories, and systems, as well as to practising teachers and tertiary personnel, for reaction and comment. The feedback received will determine the final shape of these materials. Initial responses are proving positive. The ALL team believes that national level ESL work needs to be promoted and developed more strongly.

In SA the ALL curriculum model is being employed as a starting point for a formal state-wide ESL curriculum development project. Other systems and other states are using the *ALL Guidelines* as a basis for professional training and development and centre- or school-based syllabus development.

## In hindsight: some key issues in national curriculum renewal

As the ALL Project comes closer to its end, and as the team reflects on its experience in national curriculum renewal, certain issues have become evident:

- **The need for flexibility**. When considering the question of national curriculum renewal in languages it was essential that the *ALL Guidelines* provide sufficient guidance to assist teachers, syllabus planners, policy makers, and teacher

**Figure 4:** Australian Language Levels (ALL) project

## What the ALL Guidelines Can Offer You

- guidelines written by Australian language teachers for Australian language teachers
- guidelines which are applicable to all languages
- guidelines on all aspects of the languages curriculum (programming, syllabus design, assessment, method, etc.)
- guidelines based on the best of current classroom practice and the latest developments in applied linguistics
- guidelines which tell you not only 'why' but also 'how to'
- guidelines to help you evaluate your own curriculum/syllabus/program and make any necessary changes – at your own pace
- planning tools to help you to plan a richer languages diet for all learners
- a principled, learner-centred, activities-based approach which focuses on *language use*
- an approach which is holistic and integrated from the planning level through to assessment
- an approach which is designed to enhance learners' interest and motivation
- an approach which is consistent for all phases of schooling (K/P/R/T-12)

educators. At the same time it was essential that they be sufficiently flexible to allow for several layers of adaptation, according to the needs of particular languages (including ESL), systems, schools, and groups of learners.

- **The integration of professional and curriculum development**. Since the key to flexibility in the *ALL Guidelines* has been that the curricular skills of teachers are given prime importance in the delivery of programs at classroom level, a major component of the development of the guidelines and subsequent ALL-based syllabuses and programs, has been an associated and concurrent program of professional development.
- **The concept of a framework**. In the development of a framework, however flexible, certain decisions have to be made by the writers, based on wide consultation and a reading of the available literature. Because of the writers' need to take a stand, the curriculum model developed is unlikely to please *everyone* in the field. While in

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some cases it is the particular position taken in the curriculum model which causes discomfort, in others it is the very concept of a curriculum framework which can appear to be a problem. The ALL team believes that it is important to appreciate this difference in any discussions and consultations regarding the ALL curriculum framework.

- **Contextual constraints**. In any educational system programs in languages other than English and ESL often have to be provided within a context where ideal resources and expertise are not always available. In Australia at present, for example, the emergent push for the teaching of the languages of Asia has in some cases resulted in the employment of teachers who are not as yet particularly proficient in the language, and who at the same time have to work with a limited supply of appropriate teaching resources. The *ALL Guidelines* have had to take a position which presupposes and values the skills which the majority of language and ESL teachers in Australia possess or will develop through professional development. They also presuppose that a supply of appropriate resources is already available or is capable of being produced. Without these assumptions the *ALL Guidelines* could well have been compromised to such an extent that their pursuit of the concepts of excellence and curriculum renewal might have become totally irrelevant.
- **The need for consultation**. Because of the opportunities offered to all states and territories for collaboration with the writing team from the outset, the team believes that the states and territories have always felt a certain ownership of the *ALL Guidelines*. The ALL team cannot emphasise enough the need for consultation at every level in curriculum development, nor the need for curriculum development processes which involve practising teachers.

## National cooperation and collaboration

An external evaluation of the ALL Project's achievements was recently undertaken under the auspices of the Australian Educational Council's Standing Committee (Schools). The evaluator's report highlights the fact that the *ALL Guidelines* are already being used extensively both formally and informally by educational systems Australia-wide. The report also emphasises the success of the training and development activities undertaken by the team, and it indicates areas for further research – in particular an examination of the possibility of creating a proficiency scale for school language learners.

The ALL Project has brought the language teaching field in Australia towards a high degree of national cooperation and collaboration in improving the quality of curriculum practice in a growing number of Australian schools. It is hoped that when the Project ceases to exist, a mechanism or organisation might be established to act as a 'clearing house' for developments in languages curriculum which can be shared nationally, to advise on appropriate modes of teacher development, and finally to carry out the necessary development and research associated with meeting the changing needs in languages curriculum development in Australia.

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# From ALAC* to ILY and Beyond:

## Facing Up to Human Resource Development in the 1990's

by **Noel Simpson**

### The Major Issue

The marking of International Literacy Year (ILY) in 1990 highlights the necessity for Australia to include a comprehensive language and literacy base in its planning for national development. Whether we look at economic development, which will depend much more on adding value to natural products through human skills, or at social development, where access to an increasingly complex information supply becomes more important, the significance of literacy competence is emphasized. Individuals need learning opportunities which can enhance the quality of their lives. The nation needs to maximize the learning skills of the whole population, not just an elite, in order to promote a productive culture. Fundamental to a dynamic, humane and productive culture is the provision of quality literacy education where reading and writing capacities are developed throughout an individual's lifetime.

### The Context of Literacy for ILY in Australia

Australian Government planning for ILY is centred on a lifelong literacy development approach, to cover from 'cradle to grave'. Literacy learning in our society has usually been seen as the province of infant teachers in primary schools. There are at least two basic problems with this view. The first is that the notion of literacy as a fixed set of isolated reading and writing skills acquired once and for all at a certain time is obsolete. The second is that the most important influences on children's development, including their literacy development, come from home and wider community life not school life.

For the majority of people, fundamental literacy capacities will become established during the early years of schooling and the importance of teachers' work at this time is critical. However, for a significant minority, basic literacy development will not take place between the ages of five and eight and, for a significant number of these people, the question of fundamental literacy development will remain an issue in their lives over the next fifty or sixty years.

Planning for Australia's response to ILY in this situation followed two basic tracks. First, the description of literacy which was adopted was much more broad-ranging than literacy as a set of isolated technical skills.

> *'Literacy is a relative concept which encompasses a range of reading and writing skills. In international circles, the term basic literacy is used to indicate the ability to read and write your own name. The term functional literacy means the ability to read and write well enough to accomplish simple everyday reading and writing tasks in your particular society. For Australia the goal of functional literacy in English is essential but not adequate.*
>
> *Literacy involves the integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking; it incorporates numeracy. It includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. For an advanced technological society such as Australia, our goal must be an active literacy which allows people to use language to enhance their capacity to think, create and question, which helps them to participate more effectively in society.'*
>
> *(ILY Paper No 2, p.2.)*

In addition, the National Consultative Council (NCC) for ILY went on to request 'the Government to prepare a national literacy strategy in line with the UN objectives for ILY. State Governments should be encouraged to formulate state literacy strategies and a national strategy should be developed as a co-operative exercise between the Commonwealth and State Governments in consultation with the non-government sector. Such a strategy should provide for lifelong literacy learning and encompass activities wider than education provision. Industry and community groups should be involved in developing the literacy and numeracy skills of the nation. By the end of 1990, a plan of action for a literacy decade should be developed '. (ILY Paper No 2, p.6.). In other words, the resources of society as a whole should be tapped in order to promote effective literacy development. We need to delineate a realistic expectation of the role of schools and the education sector generally in literacy development: their role is crucial but unless it is supported, and understood, by the rest of society, the necessary devotion of other community energies will not occur. The role of parents and other adults in supporting reading and writing growth in children needs to be promoted. Industry has a responsibility to support the literacy growth of workers through their jobs. Community agencies, including the media, have a responsibility to facilitate the development of literacy skills in the nation.

Perhaps the most effective role which the Australian Government's ILY operation can perform is to attempt to place these issues on the national agenda, to persuade both Commonwealth and State Governments to work together on active literacy development for all as a national responsibility and to exercise leadership by promoting co-operation through quality literacy programs. Government programs play only one part in a national literacy effort. The role of the non-government sector is equally vital. Government activities need to build on effective ideas and practices as outlined in forums such as the *Australian Journal of Reading*. Worthwhile projects are occurring at state, regional and local levels across the country but they need to be harnessed to increase the efficiency of the national effort.

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*Adult Literacy Action Campaign

## Adult Literacy and ILY

It was surprising to some that the Commonwealth's program for ILY should give priority to adult literacy activities. Yet, within the context of lifelong literacy learning, this has been a neglected area in Australia and currently needs extra attention. While it is true that about 80% of people develop reasonable literacy competence during their childhood years, at least 10% do not. That 10% equates to over one million Australians. Near universal primary schooling has existed in Australia for a long time. However, adult literacy programs began to appear in any number only during the 1970's. Adults with reading and writing difficulties have, until now, remained largely hidden in our society.

One major reason for this lack of visibility is the stigma which our society attaches to adults who have difficulties with reading and writing. If their difficulty is revealed, they are often labelled 'dumb' or 'stupid'. But, for most, we know that the causes lie in lost opportunities in their childhood. Consequently, the ILY program in Australia must endeavour to have the stigma of 'illiteracy' removed; this occurs most effectively when adults in this situation can speak out for themselves. In addition it must seek to have appropriate provision made for people to acquire literacy skills at any age.

Some still assume that compulsory schooling means compulsory learning. It is not possible to compel anyone, including a child, to learn. Children are not only dependants but sometimes victims in our society and it is surely not humane to legislate that the opportunity to learn to read and write appropriately can come only at one stage in life. No matter how good the schooling system, there will always be a significant minority who pass through childhood (which is the categorisation that should be emphasised rather than schooling) without adequate literacy skills. People are capable of learning these skills at any age, just as they can learn to cook or fix a car at any age. The principles involved in good adult literacy practice are the same as those involved in good child literacy practice. A spectrum of literacy programs for all ages is required.

## From ALAC to ILY

In the 1987-88 budget it was announced that an Adult Literacy Action Campaign would be one of the programs to be funded under the new National Policy on Languages. The Lo Bianco Report, National Policy on Languages, indicated that, in 1986, approximately 17 000 people were enrolled in adult literacy programs in Australia, despite evidence that over one million adults were functionally illiterate. In such circumstances a major campaign might have been warranted but, in fact, ALAC was a modest program funded by $1.96 million for two years.

Since the early 1980's, the Commonwealth had made a smaller amount of money available to the states under TAFE particular purpose grants for adult literacy. In some states, the adult literacy effort depended almost completely on these funds. However, during the mid-1980's the New South Wales government began to dedicate significant state funding for adult literacy programs through TAFE; other states slowly began to move in a similar direction.

ALAC offered the first opportunity for a national government focus to be given to adult literacy work. $250 000 of the funding was kept for national level projects each year, the rest distributed among the states.

The national projects have been significant, including the first national survey of adult literacy in Australia. Another national project, a study of outcomes of adult literacy programs, estimates that in 1989, 28 000 adults were enrolled in adult literacy programs, almost a 65% increase on the 1986 figure in the Lo Bianco report but still only something like a 2% reach to the target group in need.

It was ironic that funding for ALAC was scheduled to finish on 30 June 1989 just as planning for Australia's participation in ILY was getting underway. One of the first acts of the NCC for ILY in April 1989 was to request the Government to continue funding for ALAC. The response of the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, the Hon. J S Dawkins, was to ask the NCC, once a budget for ILY was given in August 1989, to consider the use of some of this funding for an evaluation of ALAC. Such an evaluation was commissioned in September and reported in December.

The evaluation recommended an increased commitment to long-term planning and funding by the Commonwealth Government. It concluded that expanded provision had occurred in all States through ALAC, including significant innovations in program outreach, that additional State contributions had been engendered by the Commonwealth lead, that public awareness about adult literacy issues had been raised, that more professional provision had been facilitated and that the national projects contributed significantly to the development of a national data base and to improved national co-ordination. Most of the ALAC funding was expended by December 1989, although some will continue until June 1990. Thereafter, gains made through ALAC are severely at risk. Victoria has now joined New South Wales in having a reasonable recurrent base for adult literacy provision but development in the other states and territories is still embryonic.

## Australia's ILY Program

At the same time as the NCC was requesting government to continue ALAC, it was seeking funds for Australia's ILY program. The Council recommended in its April 1989 policy advice that funding go to four priority areas: adult literacy (40%), child and community literacy (20%), international projects (20%) and activities to raise public awareness of literacy issues (20%). The same policy directions document set down eight goals and strategies for Australia's ILY program.

In the August budget the Government announced that $3 million of new policy funding would be made available for ILY purposes: $1.5m in each of 1989-90 and 1990-91. The NCC had already decided that, in the first financial year, it would recommend the bulk of the funds be allocated to strategic national projects in the four priority areas which might contribute to the development of long-term literacy strategies. Those projects were subsequently identified and many were advertised for open tendering; they will be implemented during 1990.

One significant project in the adult literacy area is the development of literacy competency ratings scales so that a common national language about literacy achievements might be established. A second major project involves creating a workforce literacy training package to address the literacy and numeracy needs of workers consequent upon award restructuring processes and retraining programs. Another project has set up a national 008 telephone referral service (providing telephone communication at local rates) for people who want information about local adult literacy programs.

In the child and community literacy field, for example, a Reading With Young Children Kit will be developed for general use, in addition to an In-service Literacy Course for Secondary Science and Mathematics Learning and a Training Video on Language and Literacy for all Teachers. State and Territory authorities were invited to submit for funds to outline a framework for a vertically-integrated literacy strategy to range from pre-school through primary and secondary schooling to TAFE, adult and higher education. Both the Victorian and Tasmanian Governments will be carrying out this exercise.

Apart from the $3m of new policy funding, the Commonwealth will make available over $2m from existing sources within the Department of Employment, Education and Training for ILY purposes. These funds will be drawn from the schools area, from TAFE and higher education, from public communications and consultancies. For instance, from schools funding for projects of national significance will come a discipline review of teacher education in teaching English ($600 000 over 1989-90 and 1990-91). From higher education some funding will be allocated for a national co-ordinating agency for adult literacy teacher training.

Under international activities most funding will be allocated to a number of training and materials production programs in Papua New Guinea, the Solomons and Vanuatu to be co-ordinated by a Melanesian Literacy Consortium drawn from those three countries and Australia. In addition a South Pacific Literacy Project will be funded through the Australian Reading Association.

A Public Awareness Strategy has been developed with a three-phase campaign over the year aiming at an increase in literacy development options, a user friendly documents promotion and increased participation in literacy programs. The strategy will be directed at six target groups: the education sector, industry, community and government agencies, the family, decision-makers and the general public. Contact with the media will underlie all aspects of the campaign. Some funding will be made available to ABC television for a 12-part series about the adult literacy experience, to ABC radio for a variety of new programs and to the NSW Adult Literacy Through Video Project to assist in the distribution of an adult literacy video series to every home video outlet in Australia. In order to increase popular participation, one of the UNESCO aims for ILY, two rounds of small grants for adult or child literacy projects (up to $2 500) were held during the second half of 1989.

## Beyond 1990

The United Nations has called for ILY to be used to launch a plan of action to massively reduce illiteracy by the year 2000. In Australia we need a plan of action to promote the development of active literacy for all. Clearly this can only begin in 1990. Beyond

Literacy tuition for adults is particularly effective in one-to-one teaching. *(Photo courtesy of Australian International Literacy Year Secretariat, Dept. of Employment, Education and Training)*

the provision of adult literacy programs available to all who need them, a challenge for the ILY program during 1990 will be to develop the elements of, and framework for, an integrated national literacy development strategy.

In part this has already commenced through the provision of a small amount of Commonwealth funding to two State Governments to assemble the elements needed for a vertically-integrated literacy strategy through the education sector. Such an outline could be adapted for use by other State and Territory Governments which, of course, have constitutional responsibility for education. Reports from this project should be available by May 1990. The Commonwealth Government has a role to play as well because something as fundamental and important as literacy development is clearly a national responsibility. Co-operation and co-ordination between the different parts of the education sector is not easy to achieve and our record in this country is at best patchy. Yet all parts of the sector have the same basic goal in terms of developing the language, literacy and learning competencies of the population.

Australia, in some ways, can learn from experiences overseas. For example, through UNESCO, Australia already participates in a regional education program called APPEAL, the Asia-Pacific Program of Education for ALL. APPEAL has three arms to it: universal primary education, literacy for all and continuing education. The latter two are seen as occurring in the post-school environment in the non-formal education sector. All three aspects are seen as vital because basic education work with children and adults simultaneously is the best way to achieve progress. Australia lags behind a number of so-called developing countries in the region in this regard. The Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Federico Mayor, developed the theme of a comprehensive literacy strategy at the official launch of ILY in New York on 6 December 1989.

Similarly, the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) has now launched a major study of functional illiteracy in advanced industrialized countries because of the significance of this issue for future development. The position in Australia is similar to that in other OECD countries such as Canada, U.K., France and Germany. When Minister Dawkins requested the NCC to conduct an evaluation of ALAC, he also asked the Commonwealth-State Territory Implementation Working Group for ILY to carry out a review of all Commonwealth and State expenditure on adult literacy. This larger study is due to report by April 1990.

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A literacy strategy which links and integrates the various parts of the education sector is, of course, inadequate because the work of the education sector needs to be integrated horizontally with other sectors of society. To this end, the ILY Secretariat, as part of its preparations for ILY, in 1989 commissioned three consultancies. One was to prepare a feasibility report on how wider reading could be promoted in the community; this was carried out by the *Reading 1990* organization. The second was a study of the implications for adult literacy provision of award restructuring proposals, conducted by the Victorian Council of Adult Education. The third was a report on the Social Costs of Inadequate Literacy prepared by the Australian Institute of Family Studies which subsequently, in November 1989, was published by the Australian Government Publishing Service.

This latter study, for the first time in Australia, examined the consequences of poor literacy skills for society as a whole. Conversely, the social benefits of active literacy could be promoted. In other words, literacy development is a much wider issue than for the education sector alone. Evidence exists that social welfare agencies are now starting to see connections between literacy skills and dependence on social welfare. (John Tomlinson, Director, ACTCOSS, *Canberra Times*, 3 January 1990, p.1)

Similarly, the moves to greater economic efficiency through award restructuring and retraining programs have important implications for all those members of the workforce who have inadequate literacy skills. Facing up to this issue represents a major new development for Australia. Award restructuring, it has been said, over the next ten years will herald in the largest adult education venture this country has seen. While Australia was fortunate enough to earn a good living from its basic natural resources, the cutting edge of learning did not assume such large proportions. Now the country's future is seen to rest, in large part, on the application of its human learning skills. There are ramifications of this for all parts of the education sector, from schools to further education.

As educators we have long been concerned with individual learning differences in the schooling system. That concern will need to continue, particularly as the literacy expectations and demands of society increase and retention rates beyond compulsory schooling rise. However, those responsible for education policy-making need to plan within the context of the wider socio-economic environment and, in this particular area, make provision for lifelong literacy learning opportunities. The understandings of educators about how successful literacy learning occurs need to inform whatever programs are developed in an institutional, industry or community setting.

A further aspect of the broader implications of literacy development hinges on what has been called the Plain English movement. In effect there is little point in assisting people to learn to read if public documents are not readable. Studies have already shown the savings and efficiencies which can be made through the use of plain English in public documents. Part of the ILY Public Awareness Strategy will focus on this issue and is likely to draw the concern of a wider section of the community about the importance of readability and literacy.

## Conclusion

ALAC was an important forerunner for ILY. Work through Australia's ILY program on the larger questions of literacy development has a time frame of only one year. Obviously this is insufficient. The Australian Government's ILY operation is starting to build links with existing programs of the Department of Employment, Education and Training; with other national advisory bodies such as the Schools Council and the Employment and Skills Formation Council; with other Commonwealth Departments; with State Governments; the non-government sector; industry and community groups. Planning which evolves through the ILY program will need to be built into decision-making bodies such as the Australian Education Council. In the end, the creation of effective long-term literacy strategies will empower individuals in society and the nation as a whole.

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# The Australian Language Certificates

## An Australia-wide initiative to encourage and celebrate the learning of languages in schools

### What are the Australian Language Certificates?

1990 sees the launch of the Australian Language Certificates. The purpose of these certificates is to acknowledge individual success in learning another language and to enhance the status of language learning in schools by providing external recognition of achievement and a sense of individual accomplishment. Every student attempting the Australian Language Certificate's listening and reading tasks will receive a certificate that recognises and records his or her level of proficiency.

The tasks will be based on the suggested syllabus for Stage 1 of the Australian Language Levels Guidelines. The tasks will be designed in such a way that most learners will experience a degree of success and satisfaction from participating, but there will also be tasks to challenge the more advanced students.

The Australian Language Certificates project has been initiated by the Australian Bicentennial Multicultural Foundation and is being co-ordinated and developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and the University of Melbourne. This initiative comes at an opportune time when the teaching and learning of languages other than English is receiving deserved attention from both the Federal and State Governments.

### Who can participate?

In 1990 the Australian Language Certificates will be available to students in the second full year of learning Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Modern Greek. These students will usually be in Years 8 to 10. However all students in appropriate language classes are encouraged to participate.

In the first year a pilot study involving six languages will be undertaken in each state and territory. Depending on the success of the 1990 trials, it is intended that the certificates will become available to students in all secondary schools from 1991. In subsequent years, the Australian Language Certificates are likely to become available in other languages and at other levels of proficiency.

### What tasks will the students do?

Participating students will undertake both a listening and a reading task. The listening task will involve a pre-prepared voice tape and will last about 10 minutes. The reading tasks will include a variety of reading materials and will last approximately 25 minutes. It is intended that both tasks will be completed during a regular classroom period. Instructions and essential information about the tasks will be provided in English. Students will record their answers on provided sheets which will be forwarded to ACER.

The materials for the reading tasks will be designed to provide students with interesting and culturally-relevant passages, perhaps in the form of a short magazine which students will be able to keep. Additional activities may also be included for students to attempt at home or perhaps in a later language class.

### Who will prepare the tasks?

The listening and reading tasks in each language are being developed by a panel of experts that includes practising teachers of that language. Each panel is chaired by a member of the Academic staff of the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Arts or Institute of Education. Members of the language panels have been drawn from throughout Australia.

All tasks will have been trial tested on small groups of students prior to their administration in May and August to establish that they are of an appropriate level of difficulty and that instructions to students are clear.

### What will be expected of teachers?

Teachers will be asked to forward to ACER the number of students participating and to collect a basic registration fee of $1 per student. They will be mailed sufficient listening and reading materials for their classes. The tasks will be administered by the teacher and the answer sheets returned to ACER for correction.

### Dates

The listening and reading tasks are being administered in schools on the following dates:

Wednesday 16 May 1990
French, Japanese, Modern Greek

Tuesday 21 August 1990
Chinese, German, Italian

### Further information

Accompanying ACER's Newsletter, which will be circulated to secondary schools throughout Australia in early March 1990, there will be an insert which will include sample materials illustrating the kinds of tasks to be used.

In 1990 the participating schools will be selected to be broadly representative of State, Catholic, Independent and other schools in each state and territory in terms of school type and geographical location. However all teachers interested in participating are encouraged to provide details about the languages in which their school is interested as well as the approximate number of students in their second year of learning each language to the co-ordinator of the Australian Language Certificates.

**Susan Zammit**
ACER
PO Box 210
Hawthorn, Victoria 3122
Tel: (03) 819 1400. Fax: (03) 819 5502

# Australian Education Centres

Australia's international education organisation, IDP (the International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges), has responded swiftly to the Australian Government's decision to establish 'Australian Education Centres' (AECs) overseas. The Minister for Employment, Education and Training, the Hon John S Dawkins, has announced that IDP and Qantas have been approached to establish and operate AECs in the Asia-Pacific region as soon as possible. The announcement followed the Government's adoption of the main recommendation of the joint industry panel set up to advise on AECs.

AECs will commence operation in 1990 through IDP's overseas office network with the support of Qantas infrastructure, and will provide information, counselling and assistance with application processing to overseas students, and support for the promotion and recruitment activities of Australian education institutions.

AECs will be fully operational in Jakarta, Singapore, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Suva, Taipei and Kuala Lumpur by 1 March 1990. An AEC will be operational in Seoul for the second half of 1990 and in Tokyo by the end of the year. AECs in China are also under active consideration. A decision on the establishment of an AEC in Manila has yet to be taken.

AECs will be the only such centres endorsed by the Australian Government and all student enquiries received by the Australian diplomatic missions will be referred to the local AEC. They will project a strongly identifiable Australian educational presence and will have as their primary role

- to represent impartially and equitably all subscribing Australian education institutions registered to offer courses for overseas students,
- to provide high quality information and counselling on all aspects of study in Australia but not to recruit students on behalf of individual institutions, and
- to provide assistance with English language or other testing and with preparation of application and visa documentation.

AEC
AEC
SEOUL
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TOKYO
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CHINA
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THAILAND
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MANILA
PHILIPPINES
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KUALA LUMPUR
MALAYSIA
SINGAPORE
AEC
JAKARTA
INDONESIA
AEC
FIJI
SUVA
AUSTRALIA

# Australia: a Language Graveyard No More?

by **Heinrich Stefanik**

Language pervades all aspects of human existence, and language policies are central influences in human societies.

Historically we have been at best careless, at worst paranoid about language matters. For much of the two centuries of British settlement, Australia has been a graveyard of languages: hundreds of Aboriginal languages and dialects have disappeared, and most of the languages brought to Australia by other immigrants have been or are being lost in the second generation of settlement here. This immense attrition became a public concern only in the early 1970's. Attitudes towards languages other than English grew more supportive; our many languages are increasingly being seen as national resources as well as individual assets. A long process of debate and lobbying came to a head in 1987 with the adoption of the National Policy on Languages (NPL) by the Federal Government.

The NPL and a spate of language policies by State governments signal that Australia has evolved beyond the idiosyncratic phase of language policy making. These advances should be further consolidated by the newly established Language Institute of Australia (LIA).

Undoubtedly, the progress over the past decade or so has been underpinned by growing knowledge. Of particular value are the language questions in the Census, as rudimentary as they are. An important contribution came from the 1983 survey of languages in Australia, carried out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Much illustrative data, particularly on the question of making the study of a second language compulsory in our schools, has also been gathered through various public opinion polls. Increasingly, employers in industry, commerce and tourism are being asked to quantify their language needs; here the Asian Studies Council has been instrumental in establishing a more rational approach.

The Federal Government is now regularly publishing statistics on languages taught in schools and tertiary institutions. The Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education (AACLAME), of course, sees the dissemination of up-to-date information on language matters as one of its functions.

Each investigation anew shows Australia to be a very multilingual society founded on the unquestioned consensus that English is our lingua franca and national language. Collectively, they also point up that the community holds a number of clear views on language and language policies in Australia.

Now an important addition to our knowledge-base on how the community thinks about language issues has been made by a large-scale national survey conducted by AGB: McNair on behalf of the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA). The office commissioned the survey in order to have a database in developing the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia. The agenda was launched by the Prime Minister in July, 1989.

The survey relied on four samples:

— a General sample drawn from the whole community....1552;
— a Second Generation sample made up from persons who have at least one parent born overseas in a Non-English speaking country....823;
— a NESB sample of immigrants from Non-English speaking countries who have lived in Australia for more than 10 years....986;
— and finally, a Recent Arrivals sample made up of immigrants from Non-English speaking countries who have lived in Australia for less than 10 years....1141.

Altogether, the survey involved more than 120 questions, 312 variables and 4 500 households. A dozen or so questions are of particular relevance to language policy. Much light is thrown on language issues in Australia. However, because of the purpose of the survey, attitudes towards Australia's indigenous languages are not directly explored.

In the following sections, key findings will be reviewed and related to policy issues. The tables drawn on refer to both language education and to language services. For easier reference, the frequency counts have been converted into graphs.

## English

When told that a person who does not speak English has no right to expect to get ahead in Australia (Figure 1), only a slight majority in the general sample disagrees. Disagreement is more pronounced with the other groups, notably the second generation. This pattern suggests that English is regarded as being central to getting on in Australia. Disagreement with the question probably stems not so much from a view that English is unimportant as from a rejection of the draconian stance of denying anyone in Australia the right to get on. This is borne out by responses to other survey questions, which suggest virtually universal endorsement of the notion of a fair go for everyone. ►

**Figure 1** A person who doesn't speak English has no right to expect to get ahead in Australia.

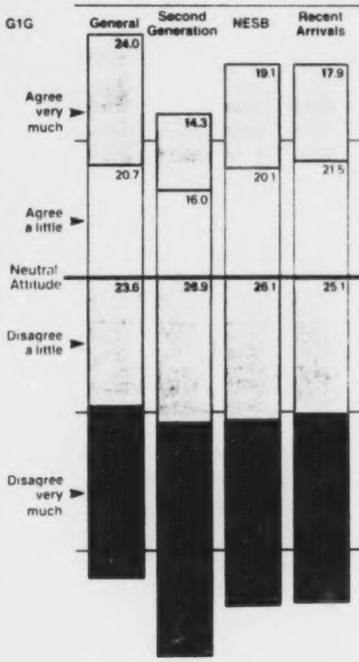


**Figure 2** Providing intensive English courses to immigrant's children.

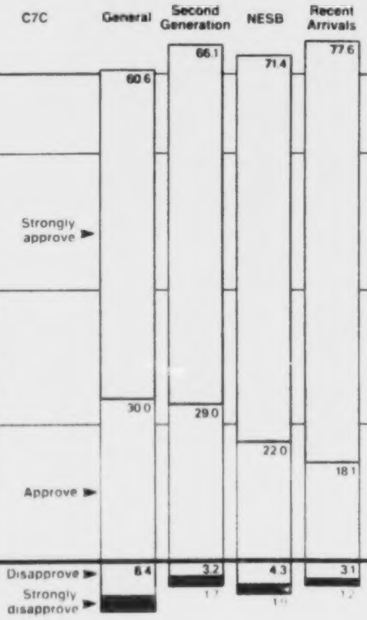
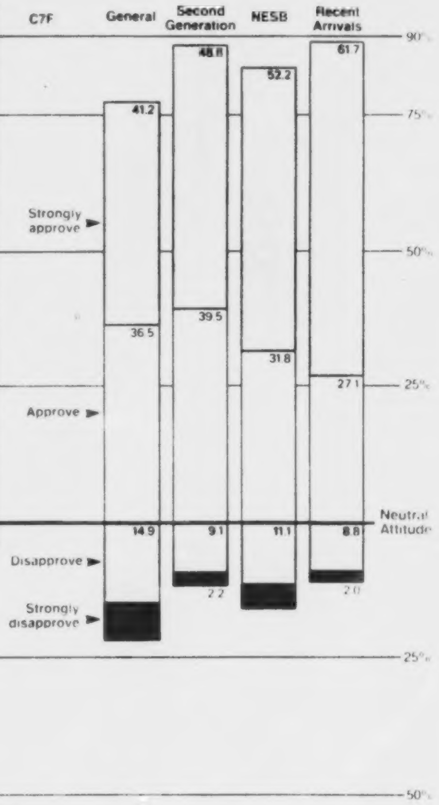


**Figure 3** Providing intensive English courses for adult immigrants at work.



The broad consensus on the importance of English for successful participation in Australian life emerges specifically in Figures 2 and 3. Across all groups of respondents, the provision of intensive English courses to immigrants' children (Figure 2) is favoured. 'Strongly approve' is consistently the most frequent response, with 'strongly disapprove' the least favoured. The support for such English courses grows even stronger among the more recently arrived respondents. A similar pattern holds for the proposition that intensive English courses should be conducted for adult immigrants at work. However, across all groups, disapproval and strong disapproval are somewhat more pronounced, reflecting a less generous attitude towards adults who do not speak English.

Overall, it is clear that the policy principle of 'English for all' – here as special measures to teach English as a Second Language – receives unequivocal endorsement. But what about languages other than English?

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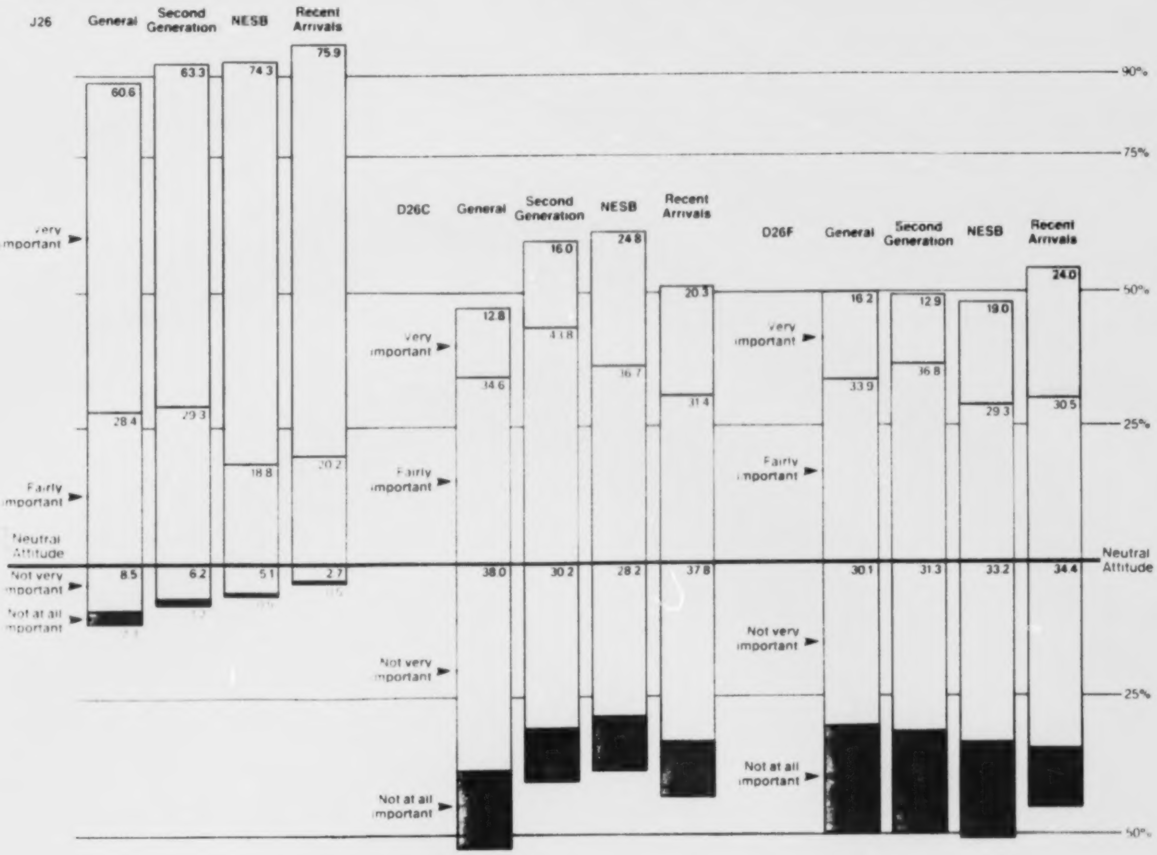
Figure 4 [illegible]

Figure 5 [illegible]

Figure 6 [illegible]



**Note:** [illegible]

## Languages other than English

Figure 4 clearly illustrates that the opportunity to learn a second language in addition to English is very solidly favoured across all population groups. It is noteworthy that in all samples those who think that learning another language is not important form an almost negligible block. This overall enthusiasm, moreover, is not new. It reflects what has been a consistent feature of attitudes in Australia since the early 1970s; however, the translation of this support into educational policy has been slow. The recent announcement by the New South Wales Government, that language studies would be made compulsory for part of schooling, is therefore a welcome response.

How then does the remarkably clear endorsement of second language learning hold for different categories of languages? Figures 5 to 8 record views

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on three groups of languages: traditional European languages, Asian languages, and community or ethnic languages.

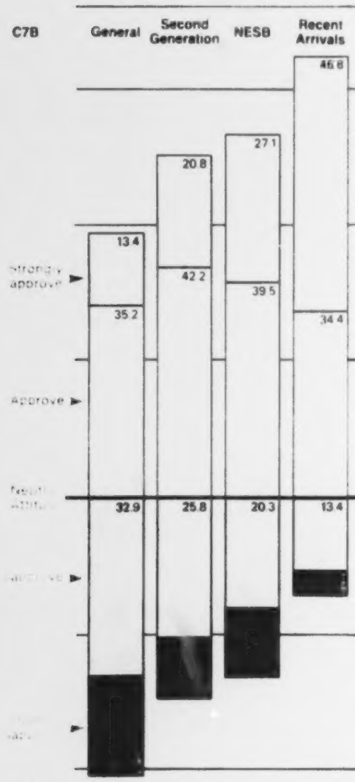
Figures 5 and 6 reveal that, overall, support for teaching European and Asian languages – as foreign languages – is very similarly structured. The general community views and ranks their importance almost identically: equivocally and as neither overwhelmingly important nor unimportant. Across subgroups a minor trend is that second generation and NESB tend to favour European languages somewhat more than Asian languages.

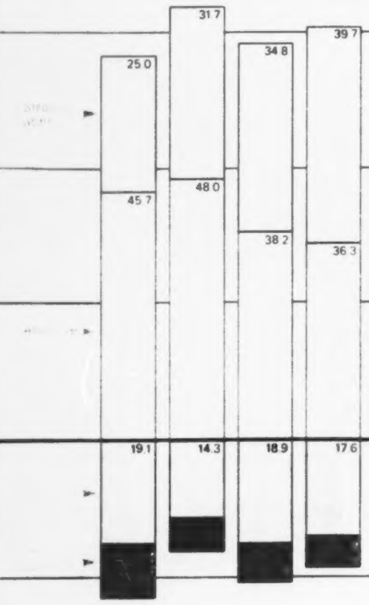
These responses come perhaps unexpected when we look back at Figure 4. They suggest many Australians are not convinced that an economic or even a traditional educational rationale should weigh heaviest in language teaching.

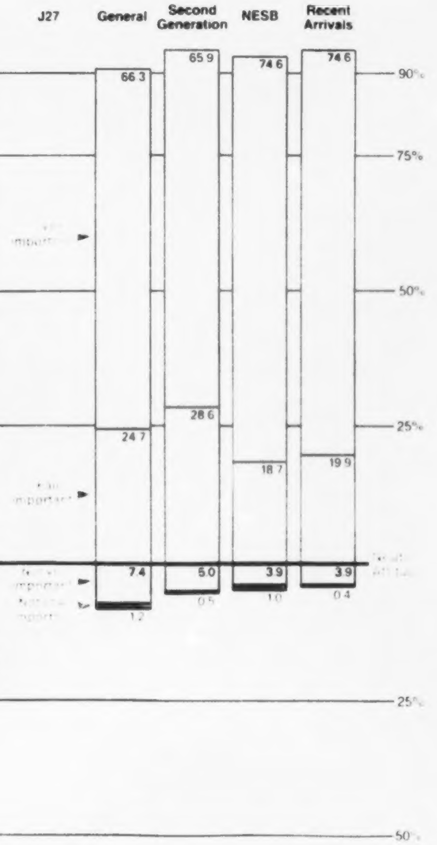
What then does this mean for ethnic or community languages – that is, for languages such as Greek, Italian or Arabic, which are now spoken in a considerable number of Australian households? The 1986 Census revealed that 15 per cent of the population over the age of 5 lives in homes where another language besides English is spoken.

Here the OMA survey is particularly informative.

The teaching of these ethnic or community languages takes two forms in Australia. One is through self-help institutions, the part-time ethnic community schools. These schools typically offer 2 to 3







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hours teaching of a language and associated culture a week. Teaching tends to take place out of school hours, for example on Saturdays. Occasionally such self-help efforts have led to the establishment of a regular daytime school, which offers a full English language curriculum but is also committed to the objective of maintaining the children's home language and culture.

Figure 7 shows that providing money to ethnic organisations to teach their language and culture to their young people is received with mixed feelings by the general community, with a negative view slightly predominating. Interestingly this ambivalence gives way to stronger support across the sample groups, with recent arrivals being clearly in favour.

The second form of community language teaching is through regular schools. It has evolved most strongly in Victoria and South Australia, and is more common in Catholic than in state government schools. The strong support for second language learning, as shown in Figure 4, actually finds most clearly expression in approval, even strong approval, for teaching in (regular) schools the languages of major cultural groups in Australia. Strikingly, the second generation group is most in favour; their responses may be shaped by the experience of having their home languages devalued or negated by the regular school system (Figure 8).

The message that educational decision makers should hear concerning languages other than

Figure 10: Providing nursing homes specially for aged immigrants speaking the same language?

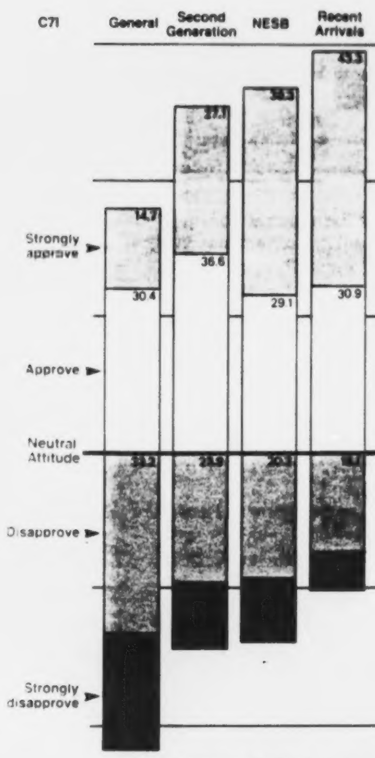


Figure 11: Providing interpreters in hospitals and the courts to help people who don't speak English very well?

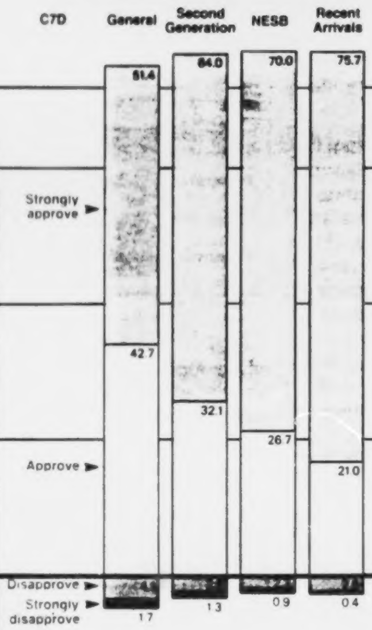
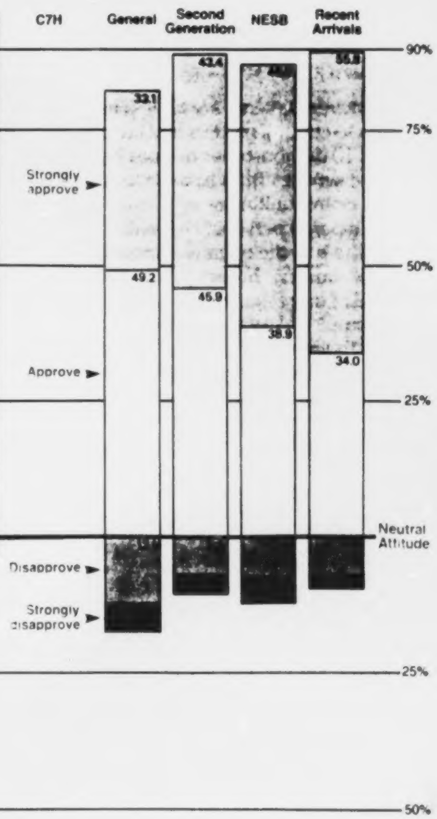


Figure 12: Providing information leaflets about government services in languages other than English?



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English is twofold. First, all sectors of the community strongly support learning another language; and secondly, the teaching of community languages is more strongly endorsed than the teaching of other languages, whether European or Asian, taught as foreign languages.

Looking at the reality of language education across Australia, there is an obvious gap between what the community would like to see and what educational administrators have been able or are intending to provide.

## Language services

The OMA survey also adds to our knowledge on language policy issues outside the education area.

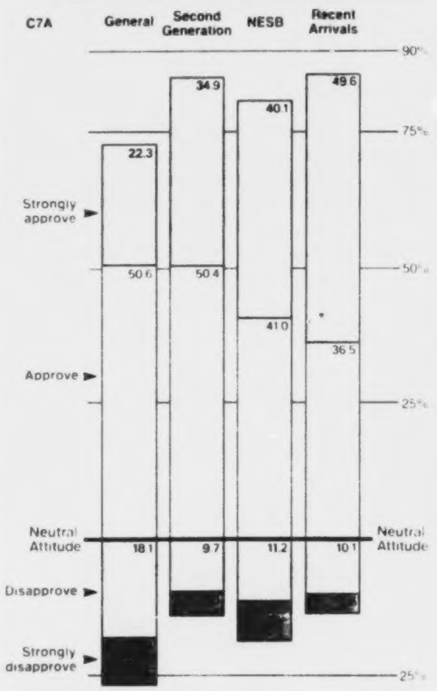
Figures 9 to 13 show up apparently contradictory patterns. The proposition that all Australians should be allowed to enjoy their own cultural heritage and share it with others (Figure 9), receives overwhelming endorsement across all sampled groups. This may be interpreted as enthusiasm for cultural diversity in the Australian community, provided everyone can share if they so wish.

However, patterns are far less unanimous when it comes to cultural matters that are not readily shared. Figure 10 demonstrates as does Figure 7, that ethno-specific services (that is, services run by and for an ethnic oommunity) are seen quite differently by different types of persons. The major factor is how close he or she is to the migration process. Thus language-specific nursing homes for the elderly are disapproved of more than they are approved of in the general sample. However, among the recently arrived group the endorsement clearly shifts towards such ethno-specific services. The outlook of the more recently arrived is of course reinforced by their daily experience of how frustratingly difficult it is to acquire a sufficiently good command of English to function effectively and take part in general community affairs.

Agreement is restored essentially when it comes to providing interpreters or translators in hospitals or courts to ensure everyone has access to general services (Figure 11). The same constellation is found in respect to providing information leaflets about government services in languages other than English (Figure 12). Again and understandably, support for such auxilliary services in other languages is most enthusiastic among the recently arrived.

Radio and television programmes in languages other than English, funded by government (Figure 13) also enjoy solid backing across all groups, with the second generation being most enthusiastic.

**Figure 13** Radio and television shows in languages other than English supported by Government



Figures 9 to 13 suggest that the general community group's support quickly weakens when 'special' services are offered instead of expanding generally available English language services. On the other hand, language policies which see services in other languages as auxilliary or complementary to English language services are squarely based on strongly positive attitudes.

## Summary

The OMA survey illuminates a wide range of issues in language policy. There is overwhelming consensus on the centrality of English. In the education area, the survey challenges policy makers to ensure that their decisions better reflect widely held community views, particularly on the teaching of community languages in schools. Concerning language services, the survey uncovers strong support for services in languages other than English as long as their main purpose is to make services already available in English more accessible.

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Finally, the survey underscores the point that the National Policy on Languages must be more than a language education policy.

Politicians would be well advised to take all of these points into consideration as they deliberate on how to build on the bundle of programs which gave initial expression to Australia's National Policy on Languages. Failure to develop a follow-up program could in fact be seen as signalling that, as a nation, we are unwilling to learn the lessons of history. And this just at a time when we have begun, ever so modestly, to eradicate the stigma of Australia being one of the major language graveyards of all times.

*Heinrich Stefanik is a member of AACLAME.*

# Melanesian Literacy Project

The National Policy on Languages (NPL) has always attempted, both in its initial conception and also in its early implementation to be international or, at least, internationalist. Languages inevitably are. The NPL attempted to deal with the external English language education efforts of Australia: EFL for aid and economics. This, however, is a vast area, with large resources now devoted to it completely independent of the NPL. Elsewhere *Vox 4* reports on the major achievement of the completion of the IELTS tests and the imminent establishment of the Australian Education Centres overseas.

But Australian aid, not just economics, is also strongly affected by language matters and often deals with language issues. English is a remarkably important commodity in the world of services development. Indeed access to technical literature is one of the key motivating factors in the study of English across the world.

AIDAB provides support for English language training in the region. In 1983, a subcommittee of the then ADAB Education Advisory Committee commented that most of the entire foreign aid budget for training could be devoted to English teaching.

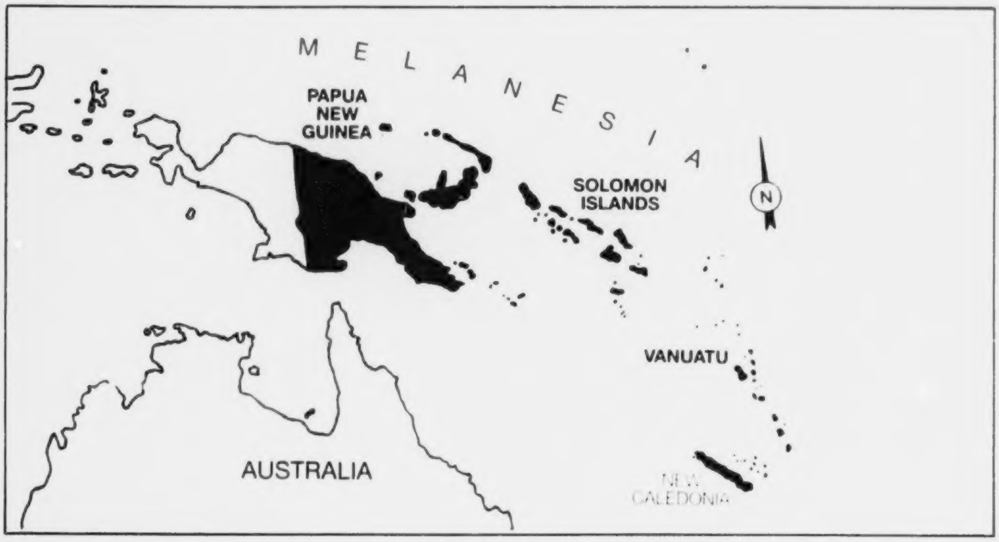
AACLAME'S second Occasional paper *Illiteracy in Melanesia: A Preliminary Report* by D.T. Tryon of the Research School of Pacific Studies at the ANU, comments: 'Comparisons with the current educational position in the ASEAN countries (Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Brunei) reveal that proportionally the recently independent countries of Melanesia lag well behind their Asian neighbours in terms of UNESCO's Karachi Plan of 1960 in their efforts to achieve universal primary education' (p.1). The report 'shows that two other Melanesian states, namely the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu share an illiteracy level similar to that established for Papua New Guinea, and that the problem in this region will undoubtedly become gravely exacerbated within a short time by the very high annual population growth rate which prevails in the countries which constitute Melanesia' (p.43).

The Australian National Commission for UNESCO, through its APPEAL committee (Asia Pacific Program of Education for All) has given birth to the Melanesian Literacy Project.

This important project brings together the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea (the English-speaking Melanesian states, excluding French New Caledonia: Vanuatu, of course, has extensive French speaking areas) in a combined co-operative effort on literacy. Following a period of consultations with the three countries, a technical consultation was held in Canberra on 14-15 August 1989, funded by AIDAB. There was unanimous and enthusiastic agreement to commence a project to combat illiteracy. The following projects were agreed:

## Solomon Islands

- **Indigenous Language Survey.** The aim of this project is to provide the information base necessary to develop a language and literacy policy and the planning of methods for implementing this policy.
- **Literacy Awareness Campaign.** This component of the activity aims to raise community awareness of the benefit of becoming literate. The project will especially set out to encourage parents to send their children to school and provide family and community support for their learning activities in general and their reading in particular. ►



- **Pilot Literacy Project.** This project will enable the Government and interested non-government organisations to explore the possibilities of raising the level of literacy in the country through non-formal methods. It will enable the government to assess the mechanisms which might be appropriate for the expansion of literacy work throughout the country.

## Vanuatu

- **Women's literacy.** The aim of this project is to implement a program of literacy education, including the development of materials, to raise the level of literacy of women in rural villages in Vanuatu to a functional level.
- **Second-chance for school dropouts.** The second project aims to provide opportunities to young people who have dropped out of school to have a 'second chance' at becoming literate or to reinforce literacy skills already gained.

## Papua New Guinea:

- **National Literacy Secretariat.** This will aim to create a co-ordination and planning monitoring agency for literacy throughout the country.
- **Training of Literacy Workers.** This will intensify extend and improve the training of literacy education personnel.
- **Materials production.** This project aims to develop and evaluate basic teaching aids, including promotional (eg drama) materials and activities to accompany the other projects.

These projects were developed in detail and have since been further elaborated, refined and costed. It was proposed that a Melanesian Literacy Council be set up as the co-ordinating and implementing agency of the overall project so that multi-country co-operation could be facilitated.

Subsequent to this meeting, a Melanesian Literacy Consortium was created comprising the Universities of Papua New Guinea, the University of the South Pacific (Port Vila based Pacific Languages Unit), the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, the University of New England, the Australian National Commission for UNESCO and the National Consultative Council for International Literacy Year. Mr Naihuwo Ahai of the Ministry of Education in PNG was declared the co-ordinator of the project which will be based in Port Moresby. The main features of this project which have led to its early success have been the participatory and consultative nature of its development and the great degree of local expertise and enthusiasm for its goals. Initial funding of $250 000 has been provided by the national Consultative Council for ILY. Mr Lo Bianco, the project initiator, has been negotiating with the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau and UNESCO regarding the possible creation of an Australian Funds-in-Trust arrangement with UNESCO to provide 3.5 year guaranteed support to the project.

# Understanding Italy – Language, Culture, Commerce: An Australian Perspective

**A Recent Publication Relevant to Language Policies**

*ed. by* ***Camilla Bettoni*** *and* ***Joseph Lo Bianco.***
Frederich May Foundation for Italian Studies, University of Sydney (1989)

This is the title of a new 243 page book, published by the Frederich May Foundation for Italian Studies at the University of Sydney. The book's contents are revealed by the sub-title: Language, Culture, Commerce – An Australian Perspective.

In his foreword the Prime Minister, The Hon RJ Hawke says:

> *'Modern Italy is a major industrial power in Europe, estimated to be the fourth or fifth largest economy in the West. It is a resource-poor economy which has been built by high technology transformation of raw materials. Australia's trade with Italy grew by 25% in 1987, making it a major economic partner. The potential for further growth is great. In this volume the banking, trading, scientific and engineering achievements of contemporary Italy as well as the more conventional cultural aspects are described and analysed from the point of view of Australians and our relations with Italy'.*

Over one quarter of a million Australians are Italian-born and at least another half-million Australians are of Italian descent. Italian teaching in Australia will therefore have a long and strong future as the language of the country's largest non-British isles ethnic group. The vast impact which the history of the Italian peninsula and its islands have had on the cultural, intellectual, linguistic and political make-up of the modern world through its ancient, medieval, Renaissance and modern ages also guarantees Italian a role in Australia's education as a 'cultural' language.

GERMANY
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
SWITZERLAND
AUSTRIA
FRANCE
HUNGARY
YUGOSLAVIA
ITALY
BANIA

But *Understanding Italy* also expressly sets out, as the editors Bettoni and Lo Bianco point out in their introduction, to give Italian, and Italy, 'a new image: no longer that of a language studied only for humanistic and humanitarian reasons, but also that of a practical tool which can be combined with training and qualifications in professional and technical fields'.

The volume is divided into five parts. The first deals with important economic and commercial aspects of Italy and its relationship with Australia. It attempts to give depth to the figures on the balance of trade and Gross Domestic Product, as well as exploring the implications of the formation of a single market in Europe in 1992, utilising Italy as a bridge to this market of 320 million people, the world's largest. The second part, dealing with cross-cultural relations, addresses some of the 'politological',[anthropological study of politics] historical, legal and linguistic considerations which affect our understanding of Italy.

In the third part of the book some of the main areas in which a better understanding of Italy's achievements could be of benefit to Australia are considered. Besides the traditional humanistic 'glories' are some surprising areas for example, physical and mathematical sciences. 'In this century, the school of physics which grew up around Enrico Fermi in Rome over fifty years ago is still one of the strongest in the world: in fact, I would rank it third after those of the United States and the Soviet Union. In mathematics, Italy is rapidly overtaking Britain, France and Germany and will probably lead Europe by the turn of the century' (Cowling p91). Cinema, literature, music, biological sciences, engineering, biomedical engineering, among other areas, complete this section. The fourth part addresses several aspects of the teaching of Italian language, in several countries and at different levels (eg Business Italian, Italian as a community language) whilst the fifth describes some active institutions, trusts and foundations, both in Italy (on Australian studies) and in Australia on Italian studies.

Some contributions are brief suggestive sketches. Other are full length rigorously academic essays – all in all a volume to update and expand knowledge and understanding of Italy from an Australian perspective. ►

# Centre for Intercultural Studies and Multicultural Education at the University of Adelaide

In October 1989 the University of Adelaide established a Centre for Intercultural Studies and Multicultural Education with the aim of building upon a wide range of cross-cultural research interests within the University. Professor J.J. Smolicz was elected as the foundation director of the Centre. The Centre's Board includes members of the University's Faculties of Arts, Science, Medicine and Engineering, members of administrative staff and its International Relations Branch, and a representative from the South Australian Office of Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs. Among the Board's ten members are speakers of Modern Greek, Italian, Polish, Latvian, Arabic, Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, Malay and Vietnamese. The new Centre has received support from the Government of South Australia through an initial grant of $20,000 which was announced at the Centre's inaugural business meeting attended by people drawn from a variety of academic, ethnic, linguistic, and institutional backgrounds.

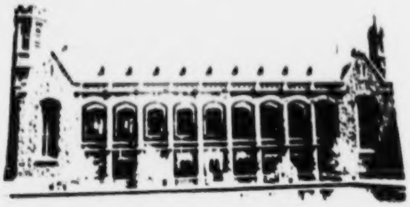
The Centre will pursue studies in cultural, linguistic and racial pluralism from a specifically Australian perspective. As its name suggests, it will have a dual focus in that its work will relate both to multicultural phenomena, which are to be found within the Australian community, and to intercultural experiences which occur when Australians come into contact with cultures from other countries, or when visitors from overseas (especially students) spend time in Australia. In this way, the Centre's interactionist perspective is to be pursued both within the context of the multicultural reality of Australian society, and in terms of cross-cultural contacts between Australia and other countries, including those within our region and those with close heritage links with the Australian population (such as Greece, Italy and Ireland).

The idea of the Centre first arose out of the report to the South Australian government, *Education for a Cultural Democracy* (Smolicz Report, 1984) which recommended that both universities in the State should take steps to 'provide courses and undertake research in areas relevant to South Australia's multicultural society which are not covered at present.'

The University of Adelaide already has considerable strengths in the fields of education, language and culture from both multicultural and intercultural perspectives. The Department of Education, for example, has an international reputation for its work on cultural pluralism within Australian society which has been going on for some two decades. There are also many examples of research collaboration and scholarly and student exchanges with universities and institutions in England, Germany, Poland, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Netherlands, Thailand, Canada, India, Korea, China, Japan and Malaysia. The new Centre will provide structural focus for these activites, bring them together for the development of co-operative programmes and approaches which will have a greater impact on the University and the wider community.

One of the areas which the Centre hopes to develop is the education of teachers of languages other than English through specialised strands in the degrees of Bachelor and Master in Educational Studies. The recognition of overseas professional and academic qualifications is another area which the Centre intends to make a special focus. Three members of the Centre's Board are currently involved in this work – Professors R.E. Luxton and J.J. Smolicz through their membership of the academic panel of the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) and Mrs Beatrice Howarth through her extensive experience in this field at the South Australian Office of Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs.

It is also proposed to extend studies on ways of encouraging and facilitating the adaptation of overseas students, especially those from Asia, to Australian educational institutions. Recent research in the University of Adelaide's Department of Education has revealed several linguistic and racial factors which are of both theoretical interest and practical importance. There is now increasing awareness within the University of the diversity to be found among its students, as well as its staff, and the Centre for Intercultural Studies and Multicultural Education has the potential to play an important role in furthering linguistic pluralism and the development of pathways for social and cultural interaction.



# IELTS – A New International English Language Test

A new high quality test of English language skills was officially launched in Canberra on 22 November, 1989.

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is the product of more than two years of collaboration and cooperation between the United Kingdom and Australia. Partners in the development of IELTS are the British Council, the International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges (IDP) and the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate. The new test has been trialled on thousands of different types of students in many countries throughout the world. IELTS is an English test based on candidates' study needs. It is particularly designed for the following groups of students – postgraduates, undergraduates, professional trainees, technical vocational trainees and upper secondary students. The test provides guidance for University and College administrators, teachers and students. It allows better planning of study programs, saving valuable time and money. With its world-wide acceptance, a current IELTS result is useful for a range of study and employment situations.

IELTS is unique among internationally recognised tests in that it gives an accurate indication of ability to use the four primary English skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Some of the other major tests such as TOEFL do not contain a speaking test and generally do not test writing skills – key skills for anyone studying, working or simply living in an English speaking country. IELTS is the least expensive international test of all four primary English skills which is readily available. There are different applications of the test relating to English for academic purposes, training purposes and everyday use. It has been designed to reflect *international* English usage and therefore has the broadest possible application.

Many Australian institutions prefer overseas students or migrants with non English speaking backgrounds to have an IELTS result rather than other English test results. Institutions can count on the reliability, validity and informative quality of IELTS results. An IELTS result indicates readiness to begin study training using English; areas of English which may need improvement; and approximately how long an English preparation course might need to be.

►

IN NAL DEV
LTS

At the IELTS launch. From left, Dr Denis Blight, Mr Brian Vale, Professor Chris Candlin, Professor Ken Back, Mr Greg Deakin. (*Photo courtesy IELTS.*)

The first IELTS tests were conducted in Melbourne on Saturday, 2 December, with most of the 70 candidates taking the test for academic purposes. It is expected that in 1990 the number of candidates taking the test world-wide will be in the vicinity of 20,000. Around 100 people are involved in the administration of IELTS in the Australian managed centres here and overseas and many more are involved in worldwide administration through the British Council.

IELTS will probably replace other English language tests currently used in Australia. Although its initial application has been primarily in relation to overseas students, the test is also expected to be useful for some categories of intending migrants, especially those proceeding to higher education. IELTS will also provide some stimulus to research and development into language testing both in Australia and worldwide. It will also have a beneficial effect in terms of influence on English preparation courses for academic study and for other training purposes, as the tasks set in IELTS are more realistic than is the case with other readily available tests.

Administration centres have been established in Australia in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth, Rockhampton, Sydney, Townsville and Wagga. Overseas centres are in Bangkok, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Manila, Seoul, Singapore and Taipei. IELTS is also available through offices of the British Council in other overseas centres.

Further information is available through IDP Canberra (contact Greg Deakin, IELTS Manager, (06) 285 8222 and IDP offices in the overseas capital cities listed above.

# Contributed Articles

The following articles by noted academics and practitioners in the field of language policy and education are intended to provide, collectively, an indication of the broad scope of language policy, and, individually, an introduction to some key issues and concerns in specific areas.

The views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of AACLAME or the Department of Employment, Education and Training.

# The Languages Of Spain: A Causerie

*by Lynn M F Arnold*

Spain is a country of immense linguistic interest. The number of different languages spoken in that country, their origins and their relationship with each other all provide fertile ground for the amateur linguist like myself. Furthermore, the effect of politics and education on the vitality of those languages interests me for different reasons.

For many, 'Spanish' is a known language and assumed to be the idiom of not only all Spaniards but also many Latin Americans. Yet, in reality, Spanish is a second language for many in Spain or at least shares equal status with another. Furthermore, the Spanish of Latin America is very diverse, to the extent that in 1900 Lucien Abeille proposed Argentinian (with its significant Italian influences) as a separate language (Entwistle:255); and Mexican and Peruvian varieties are quite different from Chilean. This indicates the potential for a linguistic diversity in Latin America two hundred years from now that might mirror the breadth of the Romance languages in Europe today. It should be pointed out, however, that speakers of Spanish, regardless of their origins, have no difficulty understanding one another.

Far from being monoglot, the following languages can be identified in the Spanish linguistic atlas:

**Romance:** Castilian, Asturo-Leonese (Bable), Gallego, Catalan, Valencian, Gascon, Lemosi, Ladino, (Navarro-Aragonese).

**Others:** Euskera (Basque), Calo, Irrintxi, Whistling language of Gomera.

**Figure 1**

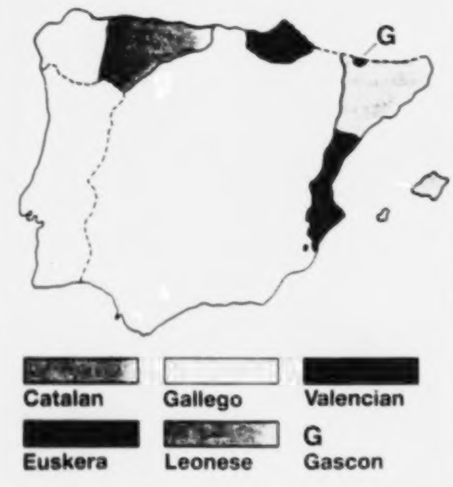


Figure 1 shows the approximate present-day spread of most of these languages (Bable, Gallego, Catalan, Valencian, Gascon, Euskera and the Whistling language). Castilian, as the 'lingua franca', covers the whole country and, for reasons explained below, Lemosi, Ladino and Calo cannot be mapped. Irrintxi is spoken mainly in the mountainous part of the Basque country.

A number of these languages have living dialects, for example:

**Asturo-Leonese:** Occidental, Oriental, Central & Asturo-galaica.

**Catalan:** Oriental – Rossellones, Catala Central, Mallorqui, Menorqui, Eivissenc & Alguerres

Occidental – Ribargorca, Pallares, Lleidata & Tortosi

**Valencian:** General & Apitxat

**Euskera:** Vizcaino, Guipuzcoano, Alto Navarro Septentrional, Alto Navarro Meridional, Bajo Navarro Occidental, Bajo Navarro Oriental

There are some implicit assumptions made in the two lists above – assumptions that would not necessarily be accepted by all students of the languages of Spain. For example, there is a vigorous debate within Spain as to whether Valencian is a discrete language or merely a radical dialect of Catalan – I have, for reasons discussed below, given it the status of the former. Similarly, though less controversially, I have ascribed separate language status to Asturo-Leonese.

At the other end of the spectrum, I have not listed any dialects of Castilian, yet some would suggest that Andaluz of Andalucia or 'El Catuo' of Extremadura would deserve such a title. As much from evidence obtained from Andalucians as anything else, it appears that Andaluz principally exhibits only differences of pronunciation and a tendency not to have changed as rapidly as the mainstream of Castilian (for example the Old Castilian word for 'baby' – *rorro* survives in Andaluz, while 'bebe' – a borrowing from English – exists elsewhere in Castile). There are differences in vulgarisms (*picha*, the word for 'cock' elsewhere in Castilian, is used in Andalucia for 'mate' . . . at least a good mate who won't misinterpret the appellation!). Such differences, along with some word borrowing from Calo (for example *chirlar* – to pinch or steal) and extensions of meanings (e.g. 'quita', a small string in Castilian, meaning 'money' in Andaluz) do not seem to constitute sufficient differences from mainstream Castilian to justify the title of dialect. The same reasoning can be applied to El Catuo. Otherwise could not 'Australian' also deserve to be called a dialect of English if Andaluz or El Catuo were so-called dialects of Castilian?

Similarly, I have not credited the Coruna, Lugo, Orense and Pontevedra variants of Gallego as dialects. These have been referred to as 'centres of irradiation for certain forms' and no more (Entwistle 306). Lorenzo Novo Mier was more strident in his consideration of the two dialect, three dialect and four zone schools of opinion with respect to Gallego, when he wrote 'none of these theories have been accepted, at least not conclusively', though he also wrote that the language, with no official status had been 'plagued by dialectisms, vulgarisms, archaisms and barbarisms. And that erosion . . . conferred on the Gallegan language a rustic and plebeian social status, disposessed of all normalization'.' (Novo Mier 138)

Navarro-Aragonese I listed in brackets, not because I doubt its separate status as a language in origin (it ranks with Asturo-Leonese, Castilian and Mozarabic as one of the original post-Roman Empire romance languages of the peninsula), but because it has been reduced both geographically and linguistically. From having been what I would term a 'duolect' (i.e. a twin sister language), that once was the language at court of the Kingdom of Aragon, it is now reduced to a dialect, dependent on its Castilian twin, spoken by an every decreasing number of people in some of the valleys leading to the Pyrenees. W.D. Elcock wrote in 1960:

> '. . . *In Aragon the persistent dialectologist may still coax from the oldest inhabitants of the remoter villages forms which sound very much as they must have done in the mouths of tenth century monks of San Millan: it is their last refuge* . . .'
> (Elcock 429)

I have also included two languages that are not in the literal sense vernaculars of Spain. The first, Ladino (not to be confused with Ladin, a relative of Romansch, spoken in the Alto Adige region of Italy), has not been spoken in Spain since the expulsion of the Jews in the late fifteenth century. The language, which has been described as 'medieval Spanish in a state of suspended animation' (Entwistle 178), is still spoken today by descendents of the expelled Jews in Thessalonika (Greece), Istanbul (Turkey), Oran (Algeria) and Ferrara (Italy) amongst others. The archaism of the limited vestiges of Barossa Deutsch are an Australian example of an isolated community losing the dynamic of a mainstream language. Ladino has shown the same phenomenon to a greater extreme such that its immutability along with religio-cultural factors have enabled its survival for half a millenium.

The other, Lemosi, unlike Ladino, has never been a vernacular. While it is no longer used today, in the Middle Ages and briefly again in the mid-nineteenth century, as the language of Catalan poets and troubadours (in preference to their own native tongue), this dialect of Langue d'Oc (known today as Provençal or Occitan) is still 'alive' to modern readers of such poetry and as such deserves inclusion in the list.

Two other languages, while spoken within Spain today, could also only be described as quasi-vernacular – Irrintxi and the Whistling language of Gomera. In both instances these languages are only part of the armoury of communication of their speakers and they both arose out of geographic circumstance. Irrintxi, a language described as 'a long, wavering yell, something between a laugh, a shriek, and a horse's neigh' (Gallop 44), was developed by Basque shepherds in remote Pyrenean valleys so they could communicate with each other across great distances (they also used fire signals at night). Apart from some limited additional use as a means of protecting commercial-in confidence matters in the sheep sale yards, the bulk of communication between these shepherds at close quarters has been in Euskera.

Similarly, the Whistling language of Gomera has been the means developed by shepherds in the mountainous part of that Canary Island to communicate, while Castilian has remained (since it supplanted the pre-Spanish Guanche language) their principal, at close quarters, tongue.

After listening to a whistler introducing them to whistlers across a valley and a reply inviting them to share a glass of sherry, Jean and Frans Shor commented:

> '*there was no mistaking that his whistling was a language. The tones rose and fell: there were pauses and intonations and stresses.*'
> (Shor & Shor 509)

It was their conclusion that while Gomeran whistlers could not discuss abstract subjects through that medium, they could 'convey most of the information necessary for day-to-day existence.'

Calo, the Iberian variant of Romany, the gypsy language, has survived through the centuries because of a combination of the chosen isolation of the Gitanos (gypsies) and the indifference exhibited to them by the rest of Spain (the Spanish Inquisition that so rigorously pursued the Mozarabes – descendants of Christians who had remained in Moorish territory, the Christian converts from Islam and Judaism and that incited the expulsion of the Jews, was myopic towards the gypsies). Still spoken today as a discrete language, it has also contributed to the vocabulary of Andaluz, particularly in song. ►

## What then of the other languages?

Euskera has attracted the interest of many linguists because it has been so difficult to fathom its origins. Spoken in northern Spain and south-western France, it is the only language of Spain apart from Castilian that appears to have survived as a first language or bilingual partner amongst entire settlements of emigrant groups (vide descendants of Basque settlers in western USA, for example Independence Valley, California, and Scraper Springs, Nevada). Its origins are unknown; even the existence of a language of vague similarity in the Transcaucasus is probably no more than a coincidence, and certainly brings it no closer to according it Indo-European status in origin. Likewise, there is a debate amongst linguists as to whether it represents the last surviving vestige of ancient, pre-Greek/Phoenician, Iberian; but that debate is somewhat sterile, as virtually no records exist of the Iberian language(s). In any event, Celt-Iberian, which has not survived save for some words adopted by later languages and place names, must have been distinctly different from Euskera, if any of the surviving Celtic languages offer any testament to the language spoken by the Celts of Spain.

Charles Berlitz noted the possible neolithic origins of the language. He pointed out that the Euskera word for 'knife' translates as 'the stone that cuts' and 'ceiling' means 'roof of the cave' as evidence of the possibility. (Berlitz:11).

> 'This enormous diversity of languages within one country is worthy of investigation in its own right.'

Complicating the analysis of the origins of Euskera is its paucity of literature (one Basque told me that the volumes of Euskera literature would cover the table of the restaurant at which we were eating) and the mutability of the language. Despite being threatened by numerical odds (today ethnic Basques represent only 45% of the population of the Basque provinces), Euskera has not retreated into linguistic chauvinism for its survival; both its capacity to diversify into dialects and its introduction of new words as well as some Castilian orthography and grammar have not brought about its demise. Unlike Icelandic, which has rigorously resisted introduced words for new developments (for example, the Icelandic word for 'bicycle' – *hjolhestur* – is derived from that language's words for 'wheel' and 'horse'), Euskera, which has a small basic vocabulary, has introduced 'alien' words without fear (e.g. *errege* from *rey* – king – and *libura* from *libro* – book). Indeed, sampling the first 250 words in a 750 word Castilian/Catalan/Euskera/Gallego vocabulary reveals 17% of Euskera words to be the same as or similar to Castilian words.

Some attempts have been made at 'indigenising' new concepts, but not all have been successful. For example 'airport' was initially expressed by the Basque words for 'air harbour' (*Aizekaia*), but the phonological similarity with the Castilian words for 'air fall' (*aire caida*) led Euskera to adopt *airaportu* instead.

Castilian, for its part, has adopted some words from Euskera; as an example, *izquierda* (from the Basque word for 'left': *ezkerr*), may have been an attempt to avoid the ominous overtones of the language's other option for a source word (Latin: sinister/ra/rum).

> 'The eve of the post-Franco era brought with it official recognition of linguistic pluralism.'

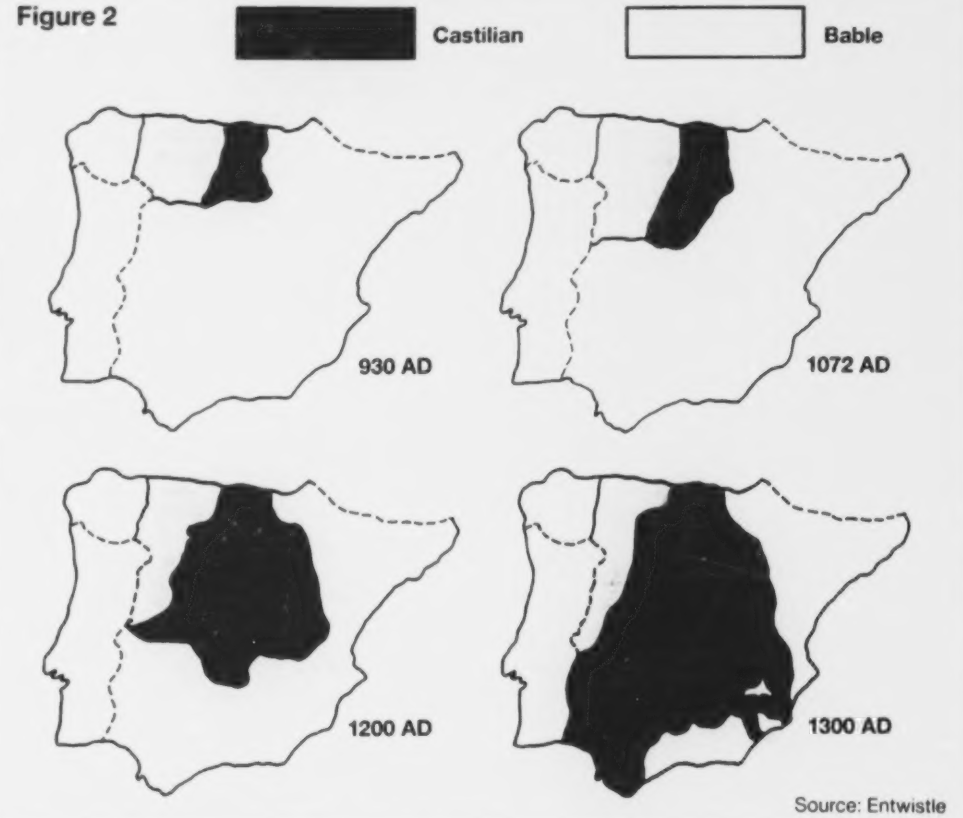
Despite its limited lexicon, Euskera is noted for its complex grammar, particularly its verbal structure. Analysis of Euskera verbs, still incomplete after decades of study, suggest there are over 200 conjugations and 50,000 verbal forms. (Entwistle:20).

Asturo-Leonese (commonly known as Bable) is an example of a language that 'might have been' and has been called 'the most direct heir of the vernacular as it was spoken at court in the Visigothic period and the most faithful preserver of the ancient traits' (Spaulding:220).

In Figure 2, the span over time of the coverage of Bable versus Castilian is graphically represented.

In the same way that a number of significant historical events prejudiced the progress of Laland Scots in competition with its sister language, English (for example the dissemination of the Bible in English in 1550, the union of the Crowns in England in 1603, and the union of the parliaments in 1703), so Bable was disadvantaged by events of history. The union of the Crowns of Leon and Castile in 1072, the coronation of Alfonso VII in Castile instead of Leon in 1135, the recommendation of Alfonso X in 1253 to the Cortes that Castilian should be the language of Christian Spain, the union of the Crowns of Aragon and Castile in 1469, the nomination of the previously inconsequential mid-Castilian town of Madrid as the

**Figure 2**



Source: Entwistle

Spanish capital in 1560 contributed to the erosion, but not the elimination, of Bable.

Today, Bable is still spoken and has perhaps survived better than Lalands Scots. As evidence of the linguistic impact of the boundaries of various types of power, an extreme dialect of the language is still spoken in Miranda, Portugal, deriving from its former inclusion in the Bable-speaking Bishopric of Astorgas, notwithstanding an intervening national border.

As a mirror image of the decline of Bable, Castilian grew from a Romance dialect spoken in remote Cantabria, and referred to by Americo Castro as 'a poor linguistic divergence' which J.B. Trend wrote 'stammered sounds which were strange to other speakers in Spain' (Trend 49) to a position of 'lingua franca' in the whole country. By 1924, the Real Academia Española changed the name of the language in its dictionary from 'la lengua castellana' to 'la lengua española'. A few years later, Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, the ideologue of Spanish Falangism was to summarise the political implications of this trend when he wrote about Spain's regions:
(Primo de Rivera 74)

> *'We love Catalonia because it is Spanish, and because we love Catalonia we want to see it become ever more Spanish, like the Basque country, like all other regions.'*

While a sister language to Bable, Navarro-Aragonese and Mozarabe, Castilian had some distinctive elements in its development. Paul Lloyd identifies three: the personality of the people of Castile (more rebellious, less stratified than other Spanish kingdoms due to immigration from a number of other parts of the peninsula); greater homogeneity of the language (again due to the differing origins of people who mixed together, minimising power of local dialects to survive); and the influence of Euskera (the conjunction of Cantabria with the Basque country resulted in a language 'heavily influenced by Basque-Romance bilingualism' (Lloyd:177,180,273)

Catalan has had a different history from the other languages of Spain. Unlike any, save Castilian, it has a national home – being the official language of Andorra. It is also spoken in France and Italy (in the Sardinian town of Alghero). Within Spain, Catalan is spoken in the northeast of the country and the Balaeric Islands. It is a language of great traditions, cultural and political. As evidence of its influence, though Cataluna was only a part of the Kingdom of Aragon, due to its cultural achievements, Catalan swept Aragonese aside as the language of power and culture in that realm.

> 'The creation of language academies have had the effect of not only providing status but also standardising the various languages.'

Catalan has been accorded greater recognition than many other Spanish languages. Even in the time of the linguistic oppression of Franco (a Galician who was, nevertheless, an ardent Castilian monolinguist), begrudging acceptance was accorded it as a patois. This was not the case with equivalent candidates for such recognition – Euskera, Gallego and Valencian.

Catalan is a Romance language that has simplistically been described as half-way between Castilian and French; yet some of its pronunciation finds echoes in Portuguese, and much of its orthography is unique to itself.

Valencian, derives, according to its most noted linguistic advocate 'from Vulgate Latin and was already spoken before the conquest of the Catalans under Jaime I' (Sanchis Guarner 186). The language is spoken in 'El Pais Valenciano' and a small group of villages known as El Carxe in Murcia. Like Asturo-Leonese with Castilian and Lalands Scots with English, Valencian is a 'duolect' with Catalan. It has a literary history that spans many centuries, the Valencian dramatists of the fifteenth century being particularly noteworthy.

Gallego, a 'duolect' with Portuguese, derived from Mozarabic influences on the Latin of an area that was more Celtic in origin than any other part of the Iberian peninsula. Like Bable, with which it shares more similarity than Castilian, it has been resistant to change giving it today the sound of archaic Spanish. In the Middle Ages, just as Lemosi was the literary language of Catalan poets, so Gallego was the language of culture at the court of Castile and Leon.

Gascon, a dialect of Provencal, is spoken in one small part of the Pyrenees, near Viela in the Vall d'Aran. This oddity on the Spanish linguistic map is the result of nothing other than the caprice of cartographers at the time of the Treaty of the Pyrenees (they also created the tiny Catalan-speaking Spanish enclave of Llivia in the midst of French territory).

## The Building Blocks of Spanish Languages

This enormous diversity of languages within one country is worthy of investigation in its own right. Why should one country, admittedly the third largest in Europe (but still smaller than South Australia), with forty million people, have developed a wider range of languages than any other country in western Europe?

As an amateur linguist approaching this subject, it seems to me that there is some utility in attempting to derive a formula to help explain language differentiation. The formula I have arrived at is

$$L = (S \# C \# M) \times P I$$

where

**L** = the language
**S** = substrate or base language(s)
**C** = core language
**M** = subsequent modifying language influences
**P** = geo-political circumstance
**I** = identity, self-consciousness
× = variable representing effect of local factors
# = variable representing interaction as a result of language encounters.

Applying such a formula to the various regions of Spain does result in a number of different languages, though it perhaps requires a somewhat arbitrary overloading of the value of 'x' to explain the survival of Basque.

The concept of core and substrate languages is not unique though in its exposition it is often held to be vertical layering. Criticism of this view succeeds because seldom is a core language layered totally over a substrate base (this would imply the effective death of a substrate language within one generation). However, if the core language is considered to be the language which determines the bulk of fundamentals (phonics, orthography and lexicon) of the final product language, regardless of the chronology of its spread vis-a-vis the substrate language(s), then the concept ought to continue to hold validity. It is therefore unnecessary to accept the suggestion of 'adstratum' or 'parastratum' and 'superstratum' languages (Lloyd 41).

I have introduced modifiers much in the same context as 'superstratum', i.e. a language of an invader that influences but does not replace the original language of the inhabitants. However, I go further to include other linguistic influences than simply those of invaders. Replacing a simple chronological layering of substrate, core and modifier languages invites the concept of a variable representing interaction as a result of language encounters (# in the formula). Lloyd hinted as much when he quoted Vogt:

> '*Bilingualism is a universal phenomenon, since no languages we know have been spoken over long periods of time in complete isolation. It is even possible that bilingualism is one of the major factors in linguistic changes.*' (Lloyd 48)

With this formula, languages can still be considered different even if their vocabularies exhibit a high degree of concurrence. The quadrilingual vocabulary referred to earlier reveals the following matching of words in Euskera, Catalan and Gallego with Castilian (for 250 out of 750 words):

| | Same | Similar | Different |
|---|---|---|---|
| Euskera | 3% | 14% | 83% |
| Catalan | 12% | 38% | 50% |
| Gallego | 29% | 31% | 40% |

Valencian does not appear in this vocabulary, however, using 328 words taken from the first section of each letter of the alphabet in a Valencian/Catalan dictionary and cross referencing with a Catalan/Castilian dictionary, the following figures are obtained:

| | Same | Similar | Different |
|---|---|---|---|
| Valencian to Catalan | 58% | 19% | 23% |
| Valencian to Castilian | 13% | 17% | 70% |

This vocabulary analysis would incline to the view that the Valencian 'L' and the Catalan 'L' are very similar and that perhaps one is a dialect of the other (i.e. derivative). However, using the concept I coined earlier of 'duolects', twin language relationships can be conceived for such similar idioms as English/Lalands Scots, Croatian/Serbian, Castilian/Asturo-Leonese and Catalan/Valencian. As an example of how it can be, I later in this article compare Catalan and Valencian according to such a formula to indicate differences in their respective development, notwithstanding their current similarity in vocabularies.

But first what were the building blocks of the languages of Spain? The following appear to have been important:

| | |
|---|---|
| Substrate: | Neolithic languages<br>Iberic/Celt-Iberic<br>Greek<br>Phoenician |
| Core: | Latin |
| Modifiers: | Visigothic<br>Greek<br>Arabic<br>Mozarabic |

The contribution of some varied from area to area.

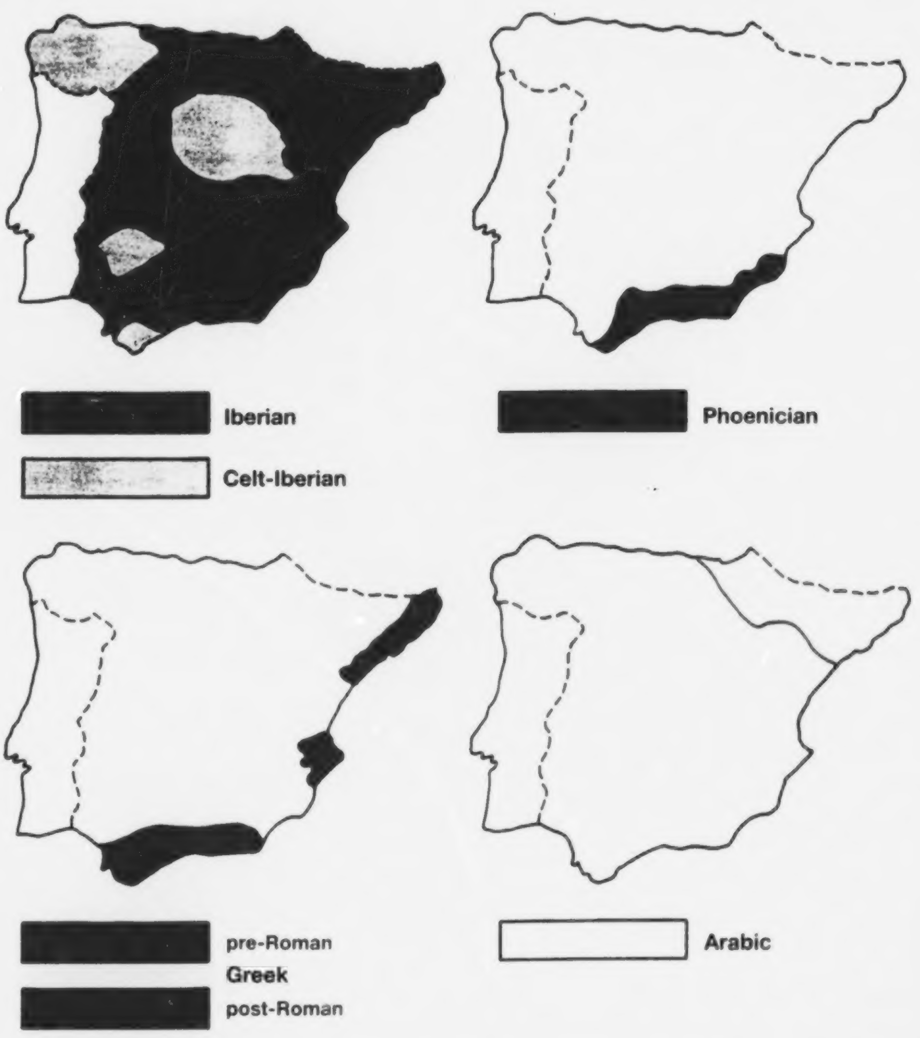
Likewise Latin for example came into Spain in different forms. Some parts of the country (the Basque country and Cantabria) received little Latin directly in terms of Roman occupation: as for others, different origins of Latin speakers resulted in different linguistic outcomes. Entwistle has speculated that the Latin speakers of the northeast were predominantly retired soldiers, pensioned off to estates, bringing with them a 'debased Latin of the camps' (Vulgate Latin) and with it a greater capacity for further change compared with the rest of Spain where a small urban Roman aristocracy, living amongst non-Latin 'rustics' propagated a rigid and correct Latin – Pinguis. (Entwistle 75)

Trend cited, but was not convinced by an alternative view of Griera on the subject of Vulgate Latin influences. That view suggested that in southern Spain the version of Vulgate Latin was that which came, via Sicily and North Africa, from souther Italic Latin dialects: while in the north, via southern Gaul,

the northern Italic Latin dialects held sway. This view is used to explain the big difference between Castilian/Gallego/Portuguese and Provençal/Catalan with Valencian being somewhat astraddle the two.

Putting aside Euskera, which clearly survived Roman occupation of the Iberian peninsula, little is known as to the dates by which some version of Latin replaced the substrate languages. While stating that some of the indigenous languages could have survived in remote areas until the Middle Ages, Garcia y Bellido argues that it was not Pax Romana that made Latin victorious over the native languages, but the Latin of the Church that had progessively converted all tribes to Christianity (Lloyd 174). Though even this gives rise to two versions of Latin. The Church used a Visigothic liturgy (basically Mozarabe) from about 550AD until the Council of

**Figure 3**



Burgos replaced it in 1080 with Roman Liturgy (in Medieval Latin). (Wright:209)

An oddity on the Latin map of Spain appears to have taken place at what is now known as Huesca. This Roman administrative centre appears to have been settled by people from Osca who spoke an Italic language (from which Umbrian derived). Huesca is located in what was a stronghold for Navarro-Aragonese.

Greek appears both in the substrate and modifier lists because there were two distinct waves of Greek influence in Spain. The first, pre-Roman, concentrated on the northeast and east coasts; while the second, Byzantine Greek, came after the fall of the Western Roman Empire and before the Moorish invasion and focused on the south and southeast coasts.

The maps in Figure 3 show the extent of direct linguistic impact of Iberian/Celt-Iberian, Greek/Phoenician and Arabic.

It is from maps such as these that a better understanding of some of the linguistic differences can be had . The formula for Asturo-Leonese, for example, contains less Arabic as well as somewhat more Celt-Iberian and Latin than for the Cantabrian origins of the Castilian region against a base of more Celt-Iberian. Likewise, Valencian has more Phoenician and Arabic origins than Catalan.

Turning now to the example of Valencian and Catalan, using the formula above, Figure 4 can be derived. A number of the entries need a little explanation to indicate their contribution to language differentiation. Firstly, the reference to irrigation agriculture is significant because Latin had a paucity of words to describe irrigation technology. Therefore this technology, that was needed in Valencia but not Cataluna, drew upon Arabic words in the greatest infusion of that language other than warfare and place names. Thomas Glick has identified words borrowed which covered both technical aspects of irrigation (e.g. *acut* from Arabic 'al-sudd' for diversion dam and *cequia* from 'saqiya' for irrigation canal) and management issues (*cabacequies* from 'sahib al-saqiya' for 'master of the canals' and *albala* from 'al-bara'a' for water ticket). (Glick:220-2).

Further derivations from the greater significance of water in Valencia include the use in the past of *refrescament* (which usually means refreshing in Catalan and Valencian) for 'provisioning'; and the medieval Valencian phrase of *lancar l'aygua a perdicio* (to throw water to perdition) for 'to waste water'. (Glick:23,54).

The role of the Kingdom of Valencia in assisting the growth of the language was of more significance than might have been suspected of a Catalan king, Jaime 1, who had newly expelled the Moors from the Valencian region. The monarch, discovering a proto-Valencian language upon occupying the territory 'began a practice of bilingualism' so that Catalan did not overwhelm the native tongue.
(Ferre and Gonzala:188).

| | Catalan | Valencian |
|---|---|---|
| **Substrate** | Neolithic<br>Celt-Iberian<br>Greek | Neolithic<br>Celt-Iberian<br>Greek<br>Phoenician |
| **Core** | Vulgate Latin (northern) | Vulgate Latin (southern)<br>Pinguis Latin |
| **Modifiers** | Visigothic<br>Provençal | Visigothic<br>Arabic<br>Mozarabic |
| **Political factors** | Rome: Tarraconensis Admin. reg.<br>Marca Hispanica<br>Kingdom of Aragon<br>Kingdom of Aragon & Castile | Rome: Carthaginensis Admin. reg.<br>Moorish Occupation<br>Kingdom of Valencia<br>Kingdom of Aragon & Castile |
| **Identity** | 1907 Inst.d' Estudis Catalan | 1915 Centre de Cultura Valenciana<br>1983 Grup d'Accio Valencianista |
| **Local factors** | | Reliance upon irrigation |

**Figure 4**

The inclusion in the formula of 'I' (Identity) is not irrelevant. The dynamic of a language as a separate entity in part relies upon a self-consciousness within a community about their idiom. As an aside, the survival of Bable alongside the near extinction of Navarro-Aragonese might be the result of differences in language identity in the two communities.

Returning to Valencian, it appears language identity has existed for centuries. Translations from Latin in the fifteenth century were described in such ways as 'de lati en valenciana prosa' and 'explanat de lati en valenciana lengua' (Sanchis Guarner:35). ►

In the twentieth century the relevance to 'Identity' of the Grup d'Accio Valencianista can be summed up in their own words in the preface of the Valencian Castilian dictionary issued in 1983
(Toran I Navarro:39)

> *'The cancer of Catalanism has been gnawing slyly at the roots of our language.'* *

Thus the various elements of the formula show more difference between Valencian and Catalan than the vocabularies evidence. Specifically, the 'S' shows a little difference, the 'C' a medium amount of difference, the 'M' a significant difference, the 'P' a medium difference; the 'I' indicates a high level of language consciousness for each while the 'x' factor appears to reveal a reasonable level of difference.

## The Languages in Today's Spain

The Spanish newspaper *La Region Internacional* reported in 1988 on the level of knowledge young people had of the language of their region.

| | Understand | Speak | Read only | Write |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Catalan | 96% | 76% | 75% | 66% |
| Gallego | 95% | 75% | 56% | 47% |
| Euskera | 45% | 31% | 35% | 32% |
| Valencian | 75% | 46% | 32% | 23% |

I do not have access to detailed survey results for earlier periods, however, I have come across some data on Catalan (published oddly enough in a book on Bable). This information, compiled in 1975, the last year of the Franco regime, revealed that of a cross section of people of all ages surveyed in Cataluna: (Novo Meir:117)

61% usually spoke Castilian
38% usually spoke Catalan
31% could not understand Catalan

Thus, to the extent that the surveys were comparable, with respect to Catalan, the post-Franco era has seen the percentage of people in that region who can understand Catalan grow from 69% of all people to 96% of young people.

In the case of Euskera, the change in the level of usage over time would be indicated by the numbers of students learning the language in 'ikastolas' (Basque schools). Uri Ruiz Bikandi provides the following figures: (Ruiz Bikandi 4.18.52)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1965 | 596 pupils |
| 1970 | 12 000 " |
| 1975 | 26 693 " |
| 1980 | 62 273 " |

and the following for the numbers learning Euskera by various modes following the 'Basic Normalization Law for the Use of the Basque Language' in 1980

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Model A | 1979–80 | 53 820 pupils |
| | 1982–83 | 114 106 " |
| | 1985–86 | 145 892 " |
| Model B | 1985 | 31 794 " |
| Model D | 1985 | 72 682 " |

Thus by 1985, a quarter million Basque children were studying Euskera in the Basque country compared to 596 in 1965 and only about 27000 at the end of the Franco era. To this can be added nearly 13,000 students studying the language in 1985 in the area under the control of the Autonomous Government of Navarre.

How had such growth in usage of languages other than Castilian taken place?

The non-Castilian languages of Spain that had survived the vagaries of politics and social circumstance over previous centuries, encountered forthright attempts at suppression during much of the Franco era. Languages were either forbidden or (in the case of Catalan) accorded begrudging acceptance provided that they were not dealt with in the formal education system.

The failure of Francoist policies to extinguish the other languages resulted in some easing of the legal constraints in that regime's closing years. The General Law of Education of 1970 permitted the use of Euskara in education and the previously illegal 'ikastolas' (Basque language schools) were legalised though remained outside the public education sector.

Catalan, while not given such legal recognition, grew in strength by community action. Though frowned upon, titles were published in the language, and if challenged practitioners could take heart from the monks of Montserrat who wryly replied to interrogating authorities that they were speaking in Latin!

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Note: '*' indicates my translation of original text

(Trend 96) But it would still not be until 1978 that the language would be taught in primary schools.

The eve of the post-Franco era brought with it official recognition of linguistic pluralism (on 16 November 1975 regional languages were legally recognised, four days before Franco's death). The new national constitution of 1978 and the Statutes of Autonomy provided the framework for change first at the national level and then devolved to the regions.

In the case of Euskera, a Royal Decree on the 'Introduction of the Basque Language into the educational system' in April 1979 preceded the Statute of Autonomy for that region in December that year. The national statute provided that in the Basque country Euskera would become a compulsory subject and that it was henceforth permitted for other subjects to be taught in the language.

This start was continued by the autonomous Basque region with the 'Ley Basica de Normalizacion del Uso del Euskara' of 1982 that created different educational models for Euskara. Furthermore, it determined that 'all pupils, on completion of their education, will have a basic knowledge of both languages.' The models of education are 'A' (teaching of Euskera as a separate subject from 2½-3 hours per week), 'B' (teaching mainly Castilian speakers in both their native language and Euskera with 12½ hours per week each) and 'D' (teaching of all subjects done in Euskera). (Ruiz Bikandi)

In another example, Gallego benefited from an Autonomy Statute for the region in 1980 and a regional Language Law in 1983. To date this means that teaching in Gallego is a part of each of the eight primary courses taught to students. (Esteban Radio)

Valencian has proved an interesting example. By 1988, almost all primary schools taught Valencian while 13 000 pupils have it as the language of instruction. Something of a Quebec situation has arisen, however, as La Region Internacional reported in July 1988 that 'the intent of the "Conselleria" – in line with its political aim of downgrading Castilian – to remove the right of children to receive instruction in the Castilian language, has been hotly contested in various towns in the region.' Legal action by protesting parents is apparently threatening the language law of 1984 passed by the government of that region. (Strubell)

Apart from the effect of legitimising the status of non-Castilian languages in the education system, benefits have also derived from other instruments aimed at language formalisation. The creation of language academies have had the effect of not only providing status but also standardising the various languages. Following the example of the Real Academia Española (founded in 1713), the Academia de la Lengua Catalan (1915), the Centre de Cultura Valenciana (1915) along with the Grup d'Accio Valencianista (1983), the Euskaltzaindia (1979) and La Mesa Permanente para la Normalizacion Linguistica (for Gallego, in 1983) all bode well for the future of their languages. The Academia Asturiana de la Lengua (Bable Institute) has now been established and is working towards:

- the adoption of a standard language
- 'expulsion of Castilianisms' where local equivalents exist.
- adoption of new words from other languages where local equivalents don't exist.
- development of an orthography.
- creation of Bable equivalent of 'ikastolas'.
- development of a professional teaching corps.
- publication of an authorised dictionary.

among other things. (Novo Meir 154-5)

With such developments, the future for linguistic pluralism in Spain looks bright.

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*As Minister of Education in 1985, he initiated the LOTE program with the aim of ensuring that every primary school child in S.A had the opportunity to learn a second language by the year 1995. He also established the Secondary School of Languages which aims to increase language study opportunities for secondary students in a number of languages.*

*Mr Arnold also initiated a complete review of multicultural education in S.A. – 'Education For a Cultural Democracy' (the Smolicz Report).*

*He has developed a particular interest in Spanish culture and language, which he speaks fluently. He is currently studying part-time for Master of Education at Adelaide University.*

(Bronze head of bull from Costi Mallorca (Museo Arqueologico Nacional) Madrid)

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# Language Retention by Ancestry and Generation

by ***Charles A Price***

Much of interest and importance has been written on community languages in Australia and the number of persons using them in the home: (eg. M. Clyne. *Vox* No 1. pp 22-8). Some articles go further and, by relating language use to birthplace of individual and parents, estimate the extent to which first and second generation immigrants are maintaining the use of their ancestral language.

Such analyses produce many valuable results. But they have three main drawbacks. First, they provide only indirect and often ambiguous information about the third, fourth and subsequent generations. Second, they give no information about peoples whose homelands do not appear in the birthplace statistics: Kurds, Armenians, Assyrians, Hmong, Sikhs, Croats, Serbs, Gypsies, Maoris, and the like. Third, they are little help with ethnic groups scattered through many countries. For example, over 42% of Australia's foreign-born Chinese population were born in countries other than China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore; over 40% of Australia's foreign-born Indian population were born in countries other than India and its South Asian neighbours; just under 50% of Australia's overseas born Russians were born in countries other than the USSR, many in China and the Americas. Relating language to birthplace in such cases not only distorts language use by the group in question – by relating far too many Russian users, say, to numbers born in Russia – but also that of other groups also. For instance, over one-third of Australians born in Vietnam are ethnically Chinese; hence relating numbers speaking Vietnamese to numbers born in Vietnam greatly understates language retention by ethnic Vietnamese.

Fortunately the 1986 census asked a question on Ancestry and the answers published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics not only give many of the missing groups – Armenians, Croats and others – but also overcome the difficulties caused by ethnic groups scattered through many countries. The percentages given above concerning numbers of Chinese, Indians and Russians born outside the original homelands are, in fact, derived from these Ancestry Statistics.

The Ancestry Statistics, when related to birthplace of individual and parents, also give information about the third, fourth and other generations. We can separate persons of Chinese ancestry, say, into those born abroad (the 1st generation, or I's); those born in Australia with both parents from abroad (the 2nd generation, or II's); those born in Australia with one parent born abroad and one born in Australia (the 2.5 generation, or II½'s); those born in Australia of two Australian-born parents (the 3rd, 4th and other generations, the III+'s). The proportions for Chinese language usage in the home then appear as: I 81.9%, II 66.4%, II½ 22.7%, and III+ 16.6%.

This seems a very likely and reasonable progression but there are traps. First, as Clyne has observed, because we have no information on birthplace of grandparents or great-grandparents we cannot distinguish between the 3rd, 4th, 5th or subsequent generations, or any language difference between them. Care is therefore needed when comparing the III+ language statistics of different ethnic groups: one group could have relatively more 3rd generation persons – some still using the ancestral language – while a longer settled group might consist mainly of

**Table 1.** Proportion using ethnic language at home (percentages).

| Ancestry Generation | Danish | French | Slovene | Italian | Dutch |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | 53.2 | 66.1 | 64.4 | 88.0 | 48.9 |
| II | 19.3 | 39.8 | 55.4 | 70.0 | 14.7 |
| II½ | 1.9 | 6.5 | 9.2 | 31.7 | 2.5 |
| III+ | 0.6 | 2.0 | 5.7 | 20.1 | 1.8 |
| *III | 4.5 | 4.5 | 6.1 | 22.5 | 1.9 |
| *IV+ | 0.2 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 9.4 | 0.5 |
| **Proportion of III+s in whole ancestry group** | | | | | |
| III+ | 42.0 | 33.7 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 3.1 |
| *III | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 |
| *IV+ | 38.0 | 29.7 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.1 |

* = hypothetical proportions: other proportions are actual

5th and 6th generation persons, very few of whom still use the ethnic language. Table 1 illustrates this.

Care is clearly needed when comparing the III+ proportions for French and Slovenes. The difference between the 2.0 and 5.7 in the III+ group derives mainly from the far greater proportion of IVs and later generations in the French group; when the IV+s are estimated and shown separately there may be no difference between the two groups. Conversely the difference between the French and Danish III+ statistics – 0.6:2.0 – does represent a real difference in language retention, there being numerous IV and later generation persons in both groups. The Italian III+ proportion – 20.1 – is clearly significant; with a relatively low proportion of persons in the III+ group it seems certain that language retention by 3rd, 4th and later generation Italians is higher than in the other ethnic groups of Table 1. The Dutch have a progression very similar to that of the Danes, the 1.8 proportion of the III+ generations being higher than the 0.6 for Danes because the Dutch III+ group is predominantly 3rd generation, with very few 4th, 5th and later generations.

In Table 1 the pattern for ethnic groups like the Dutch and Slovenes, which were very small before World War II and built up quickly during the 1950's, is for the III+ group to be about 4%, the other generations being: I 68%, II 25%, II½ 3%. Longer established ethnic groups, such as the Danes and French, have much higher proportions in the III+ category – these reflecting the greater strength of the later generations. As these proportions greatly help when assessing language retention amongst later generations, the relative strength of the III+ group is given in the main Table (5) alongside the III+ language usage proportion.

The second problem lies in the coding procedures for the computer working tapes. Though the main census tapes have all the detail, the ancestor tapes created for public use were much smaller, and could only take the items we wished to cross-classify if coding categories were combined. In the end we felt obliged to put those Not Stating a birthplace or parentage in with those born in Australia. This has little effect on ethnic groups with high proportions of III+ persons but does affect groups with high proportions of first generation persons; ie where enough first generation persons not giving a birthplace or parentage have spilled into the III+ group and distorted it. One way round this, apart from new tapes showing the Not Stated separately but reducing other characteristics, is to take the language usage proportions of the II½ generation – who are, in fact, half third and later generation – as a guide to the proportions of the III+ group.

Another way is to estimate, and then transfer, those I's who by not stating a birthplace or parentage have got into the III+ category. Examination suggests that between 0.5% and 1.5% of I's should be transferred for some groups. In practice I used both methods, comparing the II½ and transfer proportions and deciding what figure, usually somewhere between the two, seemed best for that particular group. This is simply an interim, and fairly rough method to be used until the proper Not States Statistics are available. Table 2 illustrates the results for select ethnic groups while Table 5 gives the adjusted estimates for all III+ groups.

For some groups – Baltic peoples, Vietnamese and Filipino – there is considerable difference between the III+ proportions as derived direct from the tapes and as adjusted to allow for the Not Stated.

**Table 2.** Proportion using ethnic language in the home (percentages).

| Generation | I | II | II½ | III+ | | | % of III+'s |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ancestry Group | | | | Given | Transfer Method | Final Estimate | in ethnic group |
| **Baltics** | 63.3 | 39.9 | 12.9 | 21.9 | 6.8 | 7.5 | 2.0 |
| **Ukrainian** | 72.1 | 51.7 | 43.3 | 42.1 | 34.6 | 36.1 | 2.7 |
| **Croat** | 94.8 | 92.7 | 54.2 | 62.5 | 30.9 | 42.5 | 1.0 |
| **Macedonian** | 96.2 | 91.2 | 64.5 | 61.7 | 25.8 | 40.0 | 1.0 |
| **Spanish** | 84.2 | 76.3 | 6.6 | 8.1 | 2.0 | 3.5 | 9.3 |
| **Lebanese** | 92.5 | 82.0 | 27.8 | 35.8 | 26.0 | 25.0 | 3.6 |
| **Turk** | 93.6 | 93.4 | 67.6 | 83.6 | 66.2 | 66.0 | 0.7 |
| **Vietnamese** | 94.9 | 89.4 | 41.4 | 79.9 | 61.1 | 36.1 | 0.2 |
| **Filipino** | 75.2 | 46.0 | 25.0 | 50.9 | 2.2 | 16.7 | 0.5 |

Another necessary warning, about age, concerns both II's and III's. Second generation children, living with first generation parents speaking the ethnic language at home, appear in the census as using the ethnic language even though with school-friends and siblings they may well use Australian-English only. When they set up their homes they often speak Australian-English there; the proportion of ethnic language users therefore drops. The same applies to third generation persons living with second generation parents who use the ethnic language. Recently arrived groups, with relatively more children at home, usually record higher ethnic language use than longer established groups whose second generation children are all grown up and in their own homes.

> '. . . it is plain that some ethnic groups display great tenacity in retaining their ethnic language.'

Later, we will analyse these statistics by age but for now must rely on knowing the immigration history of each group. Table 2 illustrates this. Displaced Persons groups – Baltics and Ukrainians arrived between 1948 and 1953 and have adult second generation children in their own homes; we expect, and find, that they have lower ethnic language proportions in the second and third generation than do Macedonians, a great many of whom did not arrive until the 1970's and still have children in the parental home. Likewise the Vietnamese, like other peoples recently arrived from Asia, have many children at home and thus a high second-generation ethnic language retention rate. But the Filipinos, even more recently arrived than the Vietnamese, show a relatively low second-generation ethnic language usage, mainly because many Filipino immigrants are women marrying Australian men of other ethnic origins; the home language then is normally Australian-English.

Even allowing for such differences of age, it is plain that some ethnic groups display great tenacity in retaining their ethnic language. The Croats, though many arrived with the Baltic and Ukrainian peoples in the 1950's, are maintaining their language much more strongly (see Table 2). So too are the Turks most of whom arrived in the 1960's and have few dependent children of the second generation. The Lebanese drop their language more rapidly, partly because early Lebanese immigrants were Christians who mixed more easily than recently arrived Muslim Lebanese.

Another matter concerns persons of mixed ethnic origin; persons, say, with an Italian father and Irish-Australian mother, or persons with a German mother and Polish father. In the second case the family has a choice of home language between German, Polish and Australian-English, but in practice Australian-English is the most usual outcome. In fact, taking all II's of mixed Polish and other origins the language result is: Australian-English 82.9%, Polish 7.5%, German 4.4%, South Slav languages 1.2%, and Other 4.0%.

Table 3 gives more detail.

**Table 3.** Proportions using the ethnic and other languages at home (percentages).

| Generation | I's | | | II's | | | II½'s | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ancestry Group | Ethnic | Other | Aust-Engl. | Ethnic | Other | Aust-Engl. | Ethnic | Other | Aust-Engl. |
| **German** | 61.1 | 2.9 | 36.1 | 27.3 | 0.8 | 71.9 | 3.7 | 0.9 | 95.4 |
| **German Mix** | 14.5 | 12.1 | 73.4 | 9.6 | 2.9 | 87.5 | 2.5 | 0.7 | 96.8 |
| **Polish** | 73.3 | 5.2 | 21.5 | 39.3 | 2.0 | 58.7 | 12.5 | 1.6 | 85.9 |
| **Polish Mix** | 13.6 | 18.1 | 68.3 | 7.5 | 9.6 | 82.9 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 97.2 |
| **Greek** | 92.2 | 2.1 | 5.1 | 88.3 | 2.0 | 9.7 | 56.6 | 1.5 | 41.9 |
| **Greek Mix** | 31.4 | 33.9 | 34.7 | 34.9 | 17.3 | 47.8 | 11.4 | 2.8 | 35.8 |
| **Chinese** | 81.9 | 9.6 | 8.5 | 66.4 | 3.0 | 30.6 | 22.7 | 0.6 | 76.7 |
| **Chinese Mix** | 30.6 | 34.7 | 34.7 | 13.1 | 9.6 | 77.3 | 3.5 | 1.3 | 95.2 |

Just as interesting as the second generation are some first generation immigrants of mixed ethnic origins, notably the Greek and Chinese where over one-third have a home language other than the ethnic or Australian-English. With Greeks the other languages are Arabic 1.7%, French 3.1%, Italian 4.1%, South Slavic 19.9%, various Other 5.1%, total 33.9%; this reflects the appreciable mixture of Greek and other Mediterranean peoples before emigration to Australia. The main South Slav language is Slav Macedonian, reflecting the fact that in Greek Macedonia some persons reared in homes speaking Slav Macedonian think of themselves as Greek by ancestry; these, however, are fewer than those who think of themselves as ethnically Slave Macedonian.

With first generation Chinese of mixed ancestry the other languages are French 1.2%, other European 1.3%, Vietnamese 8.9%, other Asian and Pacific 23.3%, total 34.7%. This again reflects the fact that an appreciable number of Australia's Chinese people have come from Vietnam, Kampuchea, Malaysia, Timor, Indonesia, Papua-New Guinea and other Pacific islands, with a sprinkling from the United Kingdom, Europe and the Americas. Some have there intermarried with people of other ethnic origins and use the non-Chinese language at home.

Because of the marked differences between persons of mixed and unmixed ethnic background – especially in the different speed of adopting Australian-English as the home language – it is important to keep them separate; as in the main Table (5) with all larger ethnic groups. There is, however, the matter of defining the term 'mixed'. Some scholars show mixed persons twice; for instance, a person of mixed Greek and Scottish origin appears in both the Greek and Scottish mixed columns. I decided to avoid double-counting by arranging ethnic origins in an order of priority, Australian-Aboriginal at the top. That is, a person of mixed Aboriginal and Irish origin, whether answering the census question as 'Aboriginal:Irish' or 'Irish:Aboriginal', appears in the Aboriginal Mix column and nowhere else. Likewise a person of German:Polish origin appears in the Polish Mix column only, Polish receiving a higher priority than German. The final list of priorities was: Aboriginal, Jew, Maori, Chinese, Indian, Greek, Irish, Italian, Spanish, Maltese, Polish, Lebanese, Russian, Yugoslav, German, Dutch, French, Danish, Norwegian-Swede, British, and so on.

Finally a word on the Languages themselves. Those used in this analysis are Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Maltese, Polish, Yugoslav languages (Slovene, Croat, Serb, Macedonian, 'Yugoslav'), Spanish, Vietnamese, Other, and a separate category for those using English only, all these being languages used at home by persons aged five and over. This means, first, that the statistics exclude children under five and, second, that many ancestral languages are in the 'Other' category. This analysis assumes that all persons of, say, Russian ancestry speaking an 'Other' language are in fact using Russian. This assumption may slightly overstate the number speaking the ethnic language.

With these introductory remarks we can now consider the main Table – Table 5, at the end of this article. Apart from Age and other matters already discussed the main conclusions seem clear. First, there is a general trend, as the generations pass, for the ethnic language to be replaced by Australian-English. But the rate of replacement varies considerably between the main ethnic divisions; see Table 4 showing the sub-totals set out in Table 5.

**Table 4.** Proportion using ethnic language at home (percentages).

| Ancestry | I's | II's | II½'s | III+'s |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **West European** | 56.3 | 21.8 | 3.4 | 1.8 |
| **East European** | 73.8 | 44.0 | 15.9 | 7.8 |
| **South European** | 86.6 | 73.9 | 35.4 | 22.9 |
| **West Asian** | 83.1 | 74.9 | 17.4 | 16.4 |
| **South Asian** | 46.2 | 26.7 | 13.1 | 3.7 |
| **Indochinese** | 94.4 | 89.1 | 38.0 | 35.6 |
| **Other S.E. Asian** | 74.6 | 43.4 | 11.3 | 8.5 |
| **East Asian** | 82.7 | 67.0 | 22.7 | 16.6 |
| **Pacific Isl.** | 41.4 | 32.1 | 8.5 | 5.6 |
| **Total N.E.S.B.** | 75.5 | 62.4 | 22.7 | 13.8 |

**Table 5.** Language Retention × Ancestry × Generations
(Persons aged 5 and over speaking ethnic language at home – %)

| Ancestry | I's | | II's | | II½'s | | III's+ | | % III+'s in ethnic grouping |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | Nos | % | Nos | % | Nos | % (adjusted) | Nos | |
| **Indigenous** | | | | | | | | | |
| Aboriginal | | | | | 4.5 | 2 065 | 24.9 | 129 760 | 98.4 |
| Aboriginal Mix | | | | | 3.6 | 3 360 | 3.1 | 23 690 | 87.8 |
| Torres St Isl. | | | | | 30.3 | 275 | 48.2 | 6 930 | 96.2 |
| **Celtic**[2] | | | | | | | | | |
| 'Celt' | 6.3 | 2 265 | 4.0 | 420 | 1.2 | 665 | 0.4 | 5 210 | 60.9 |
| Welsh | 5.0 | 20 475 | 1.7 | 2 655 | 0.4 | 2 775 | 0.4 | 18 385 | 41.5 |
| Scots | 0.9 | 122 415 | 0.3 | 28 780 | 0.3 | 28 205 | 0.3 | 149 675 | 45.5 |
| Irish | 2.2 | 68 645 | 0.4 | 18 020 | 0.3 | 21 870 | 0.2 | 254 680 | 70.1 |
| Irish Mix | 1.4 | 33 825 | 0.4 | 14 015 | 0.4 | 60 690 | 0.3 | 365 155 | 77.1 |
| **TOTAL** | **1.7** | **247 625** | **0.4** | **63 890** | **0.4** | **114 195** | **0.3** | **658 105** | **60.7** |
| **West European** | | | | | | | | | |
| French | 66.1 | 18 915 | 39.8 | 2 780 | 6.5 | 1 275 | 2.0 | 11 670 | 33.7 |
| French Mix | 22.6 | 8 180 | 13.4 | 2 525 | 4.8 | 6 415 | 0.8 | 28 170 | 28.2 |
| Mauritian[3] | 68.3 | 4 465 | 31.9 | 685 | 6.5 | 30 | 5.4 | 55 | 1.1 |
| Swiss[4] | 63.8 | 6 270 | 33.9 | 1 100 | 5.0 | 360 | 3.0 | 1 640 | 17.5 |
| Austrian | 52.4 | 17 015 | 24.0 | 3 515 | 3.7 | 3 515 | 2.0 | 1 095 | 4.9 |
| German | 61.1 | 91 340 | 27.3 | 23 865 | 3.7 | 8 815 | 1.3 | 100 935 | 44.9 |
| German Mix | 14.5 | 15 500 | 9.6 | 12 545 | 2.5 | 32 010 | 0.4 | 132 505 | 68.8 |
| Dutch | 48.9 | 96 460 | 14.7 | 36 855 | 2.5 | 5 730 | 1.8 | 4 425 | 3.1 |
| Dutch Mix | 13.8 | 7 840 | 3.3 | 8 255 | 0.9 | 27 900 | 0.6 | 8 825 | 16.7 |
| Danish | 53.2 | 7 970 | 19.3 | 1 355 | 1.9 | 1 125 | 0.6 | 7 560 | 42.0 |
| Danish Mix | 11.4 | 1 665 | 4.1 | 995 | 0.8 | 4 115 | 0.4 | 14 850 | 72.0 |
| Nor Swede | 45.6 | 6 375 | 21.1 | 880 | 1.2 | 1 380 | 0.8 | 6 740 | 43.8 |
| Nor Swede Mix | 11.2 | 2 560 | 5.5 | 1 110 | 2.1 | 4 430 | 0.4 | 13 080 | 62.6 |
| Finnish | 75.1 | 8 435 | 59.5 | 1 775 | 13.3 | 285 | 7.1 | 535 | 4.9 |
| **TOTAL** | **56.3** | **257 245** | **21.8** | **72 810** | **3.4** | **19 675** | **1.8** | **134 655** | **27.8** |
| **Total Mix** | **15.9** | **35 745** | **7.5** | **25 430** | **2.0** | **74 870** | **0.5** | **197 430** | **5.2** |
| **East European** | | | | | | | | | |
| Baltic[5] | 63.3 | 19 670 | 39.9 | 5 875 | 12.9 | 705 | 7.5 | 545 | 2.0 |
| Russian | 70.0 | 18 700 | 49.5 | 5 410 | 14.3 | 855 | 6.5 | 1 365 | 5.2 |
| Russian Mix | 20.4 | 2 935 | 11.9 | 2 565 | 2.4 | 3 505 | 1.8 | 3 360 | 27.2 |
| Ukrainian | 72.1 | 14 215 | 51.7 | 5 665 | 43.3 | 625 | 36.1 | 565 | 2.7 |
| Polish | 73.3 | 66 205 | 39.3 | 18 525 | 12.5 | 2 455 | 4.0 | 3 985 | 4.4 |
| Polish Mix | 13.6 | 7 380 | 7.5 | 8 900 | 1.5 | 9 260 | 0.8 | 9 120 | 26.3 |
| Czech | 64.1 | 13 045 | 33.4 | 2 000 | 8.0 | 365 | 6.5 | 290 | 1.8 |
| Hungarian | 70.6 | 30 695 | 49.4 | 7 625 | 12.8 | 720 | 10.5 | 420 | 1.1 |
| Other[6] | 70.4 | 7 885 | 45.6 | 9 560 | 14.0 | 180 | 10.5 | 200 | 1.1 |
| **TOTAL** | **73.8** | **162 530** | **44.0** | **54 660** | **15.9** | **5 905** | **7.8** | **7 370** | **1.8** |
| **Mix** | **15.5** | **10 315** | **8.5** | **11 465** | **1.8** | **12 765** | **0.9** | **12 480** | **15.7** |

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| Ancestry | I's | | II's | | II½'s | | III's+ | | % III+'s in ethnic grouping |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | Nos | % | Nos | % | Nos | % (adjusted) | Nos | |
| **South European** | | | | | | | | | |
| Slovene[7] | 64.4 | 3 635 | 55.4 | 1 230 | 9.2 | 110 | 5.7 | 190 | 4.4 |
| Croat | 94.8 | 25 680 | 92.7 | 12 205 | 54.2 | 325 | 42.5 | 405 | 1.0 |
| Serb | 91.9 | 4 700 | 91.3 | 1 300 | 60.0 | 65 | 43.2 | 50 | 0.8 |
| Macedonian | 96.2 | 23 050 | 91.2 | 9 560 | 64.5 | 550 | 40.0 | 335 | 1.0 |
| 'Yugoslav' | 79.5 | 73 490 | 66.7 | 24 065 | 26.0 | 2 225 | 19.5 | 805 | 0.8 |
| Yugolav Mix | 59.4 | 7 920 | 32.8 | 7 775 | 5.7 | 6 695 | 4.0 | 4 035 | 19.8 |
| (Total) | (85.5) | (130 555) | (78.5) | (48 360) | (35.4) | (3 275) | (28.3) | (1 785) | |
| Greek | 92.2 | 156 550 | 88.3 | 103 325 | 56.6 | 9 795 | 41.0 | 9 120 | 3.3 |
| Greek Mix | 31.4 | 5 440 | 34.9 | 8 285 | 11.4 | 8 655 | 3.6 | 8 785 | 28.2 |
| Cypriot[8] | 75.7 | 2 865 | 66.3 | 1 165 | 35.3 | 150 | 28.0 | 95 | 2.3 |
| Albanian | 77.4 | 2 740 | 73.5 | 1 245 | 36.4 | 230 | 26.8 | 270 | 5.9 |
| Maltese | 70.5 | 54 870 | 38.6 | 29 765 | 12.5 | 3 850 | 10.5 | 2 615 | 2.9 |
| Maltese Mix | 30.5 | 2 550 | 10.5 | 4 300 | 1.7 | 8 130 | 1.6 | 3 680 | 19.7 |
| Italian | 88.0 | 256 515 | 70.0 | 172 135 | 31.7 | 27 300 | 20.1 | 21 000 | 4.4 |
| Italian Mix | 26.4 | 9 890 | 25.4 | 15 775 | 6.7 | 27 405 | 2.4 | 27 090 | 33.8 |
| Spanish | 84.2 | 30 500 | 76.3 | 5 380 | 6.6 | 545 | 3.5 | 3 755 | 9.3 |
| Spanish Mix | 41.3 | 6 400 | 28.3 | 1 895 | 4.5 | 2 550 | 0.8 | 8 960 | 45.2 |
| Latin Amer | 89.3 | 12 885 | 84.2 | 1 105 | 7.5 | 40 | 6.2 | 165 | 1.2 |
| Portuguese | 83.0 | 16 760 | 78.2 | 2 660 | 15.0 | 115 | 10.2 | 690 | 3.5 |
| **TOTAL** | **86.6** | **664 240** | **73.9** | **365 140** | **35.4** | **45 300** | **22.9** | **39 495** | **3.5** |
| **Total Mix** | **37.3** | **32 200** | **27.6** | **38 030** | **6.5** | **53 435** | **2.4** | **52 550** | **29.8** |
| **West Asian** | | | | | | | | | |
| Turkish | 93.6 | 24 325 | 93.4 | 5 695 | 67.6 | 110 | 66.0 | 220 | 0.7 |
| Lebanese | 92.5 | 44 385 | 82.0 | 22 455 | 27.8 | 1 840 | 25.0 | 2 590 | 3.6 |
| Lebanese Mix | 74.4 | 1 590 | 53.1 | 1 325 | 7.1 | 1 395 | 3.1 | 2 065 | 32.4 |
| Egyptian | 79.4 | 9 245 | 65.4 | 1 850 | 3.9 | 100 | 4.0 | 130 | 1.2 |
| 'Arab' | 87.8 | 15 080 | 87.3 | 4 440 | 24.3 | 215 | 22.5 | 860 | 4.1 |
| Iranian | 75.2 | 4 460 | 58.1 | 155 | — | 15 | 12.0 | 35 | 0.9 |
| Armenian[9] | 77.7 | 8 115 | 76.6 | 1 430 | 12.2 | 140 | 12.7 | 595 | 5.8 |
| Assyrian[10] | 91.5 | 4 530 | 82.5 | 615 | 5.0 | 60 | 6.5 | 110 | 2.1 |
| Jewish[11] | 41.7 | 16 195 | 16.0 | 5 185 | 8.9 | 2 705 | 6.1 | 3 055 | 11.3 |
| Jewish Mix | 28.1 | 2 840 | 11.1 | 1 000 | 4.6 | 995 | 1.6 | 3 295 | 40.5 |
| **TOTAL** | **83.1** | **126 335** | **74.9** | **41 825** | **17.4** | **5 185** | **16.4** | **7 595** | **4.2** |
| **Total Mix** | **44.8** | **4 430** | **35.0** | **2 325** | **6.1** | **2 390** | **2.2** | **5 360** | **56.4** |
| **South Asian** | | | | | | | | | |
| Indian | 50.8 | 35 805 | 33.0 | 4 190 | 14.3 | 650 | 3.9 | 1 660 | 3.9 |
| Indian Mix | 10.6 | 12 110 | 2.9 | 2 595 | 1.3 | 2 565 | 1.8 | 3 120 | 15.3 |
| Sinhalese | 33.8 | 13 360 | 6.5 | 1 320 | 2.6 | 75 | 2.0 | 190 | 1.3 |
| **TOTAL** | **46.2** | **49 165** | **26.7** | **5 510** | **13.1** | **725** | **3.7** | **1 850** | **3.2** |
| **Indochinese** | | | | | | | | | |
| Viet | 94.9 | 52 515 | 89.4 | 1 695 | 41.4 | 30 | 36.1 | 125 | 0.2 |
| Lao | 94.4 | 5 335 | 93.7 | 190 | — | — | 28.6 | 7 | 0.1 |
| Khmer | 91.2 | 7 230 | 79.1 | 130 | — | 2 | 35.1 | 37 | 0.5 |
| **TOTAL** | **94.4** | **65 080** | **89.1** | **2 015** | **38.8** | **32** | **35.6** | **169** | **0.3** |
| **Other S.E. Asian** | | | | | | | | | |
| Malaysian | 75.1 | 4 915 | 60.5 | 200 | 6.3 | 111 | 4.1 | 270 | 4.9 |
| Indonesian | 79.5 | 5 065 | 59.7 | 305 | 11.8 | 51 | 10.5 | 70 | 1.3 |
| Filipino | 75.2 | 25 570 | 46.0 | 1 130 | 25.0 | 72 | 16.7 | 135 | 0.5 |
| Other | 68.8 | 7 180 | 26.0 | 645 | 3.4 | 58 | 8.1 | 85 | 1.1 |
| **TOTAL** | **74.6** | **42 725** | **43.4** | **2 280** | **11.3** | **292** | **8.5** | **560** | **1.2** |

*Continued*

| Ancestry | I's % | Nos | II's % | Nos | II½'s % | Nos | III's+ % (adjusted) | Nos | % III+'s in ethnic grouping |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **East Asian** | | | | | | | | | |
| Chinese | 81.9 | 133 925 | 66.4 | 13 125 | 22.7 | 3 280 | 16.6 | 5 720 | 3.7 |
| Chinese Mix | 30.6 | 8 655 | 13.1 | 1 885 | 3.5 | 4 410 | 0.6 | 8 035 | 1.5 |
| Japanese | 88.3 | 8 015 | 77.2 | 200 | 18.0 | 111 | 17.1 | 125 | 1.5 |
| Korean | 90.8 | 7 710 | 82.2 | 365 | — | 2 | 25.0 | 20 | 0.2 |
| **TOTAL** | **82.7** | **149 650** | **67.0** | **13 690** | **22.7** | **3 293** | **16.6** | **5 865** | **1.9** |
| **Pacific Is.** | | | | | | | | | |
| Maori | 18.5 | 10 105 | 7.1 | 410 | 5.8 | 240 | 3.0 | 805 | 7.0 |
| Maori Mix | 10.4 | 7 070 | 3.7 | 675 | 1.7 | 1 215 | 0.7 | 1 660 | 15.6 |
| Other | 67.9 | 8 720 | 46.6 | 710 | 12.0 | 185 | 8.6 | 715 | 6.9 |
| **TOTAL** | **41.4** | **18 825** | **32.1** | **1 120** | **8.5** | **425** | **5.6** | **1 520** | **6.9** |
| **Other** | | | | | | | | | |
| 'Other'[12] | 56.4 | 48 050 | 19.6 | 14 040 | 3.1 | 8 645 | 2.3 | 33 115 | 31.9 |
| Other Mix | 54.8 | 9 630 | 28.1 | 3 645 | 6.9 | 1 700 | 6.2 | 2 815 | 15.8 |
| Unknown[13] | 27.3 | 9 045 | 13.8 | 4 150 | 3.3 | 7 750 | 2.2 | 74 565 | 78.1 |
| 'Australian' | 10.9 | 19 325 | 30.7 | 45 340 | 1.7 | 196 260 | 0.6 | 2 311 275 | 89.9 |
| Not Stated | 40.7 | 38 975 | 32.2 | 40 500 | 1.8 | 64 385 | 0.7 | 785 000 | 84.5 |
| **English Speaking** (The ethnic %s here are non-English home languages) | | | | | | | | | |
| English | 1.1 | 915 340 | 1.2 | 238 625 | 0.4 | 493 040 | 0.3 | 3 582 040 | 68.5 |
| 'British' | 2.7 | 78 525 | 1.1 | 22 420 | 0.7 | 38 915 | 0.7 | 170 215 | 54.9 |
| British Mix | 7.6 | 56 760 | 5.3 | 23 335 | 1.4 | 172 465 | 1.0 | 302 690 | 54.5 |
| Nth. Amer. | 6.4 | 15 340 | 7.1 | 950 | 0.4 | 930 | 1.7 | 2 170 | 11.2 |
| Nth. Amer. Mix | 9.5 | 5 815 | 4.7 | 1 650 | 1.5 | 5 990 | 1.5 | 5 965 | 30.7 |
| N.Z. | 2.9 | 35 495 | 1.1 | 1 790 | 0.5 | 870 | 1.2 | 1 390 | 35.2 |
| Sth. African | 18.4 | 10 395 | 7.0 | 475 | 5.8 | 135 | 3.4 | 470 | 4.1 |
| **TOTAL[15]** | | | | | | | | | |
| **N.E.S.B.[16]** | **75.5** | **1 583 845** | **62.4** | **573 090** | **22.7** | **88 200** | **13.8** | **368 884** | **14.1** |
| **N.E.S.B. Mix** | **26.0** | **120 155** | **18.1** | **8 105** | **3.7** | **156 710** | **1.1** | **307 140** | **51.8** |

**Notes:**

**1** Numbers, except when small, are to the nearest five

**2** 'Celt' as an ancestral category, includes Cornish, Manx, Breton and 'Celt'

**3** The ethnic language for Mauritius is here taken to be French

**4** The ethnic languages for the Swiss are German, French, Italian and Rhaetian (in 'Other'); they are here added together

**5** 'Baltic' — Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian

**6** 'Other Eastern European' — Bulgarian, Rumanian, Slovak

**7** Slovenes, Croats, Serbs and Macedonians are tradionally eastern not southern European. In recent years the United Nations, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics, has put them with southern Europeans so this Tables does too

**8** The ethnic language for those of Cypriot ancestry is here taken as Greek, another 12% or so of Cypriot I's spoke Turkish at home

**9** Armenians have their own ethnic language, Armenian

**10** Assyrians, though using East Syriac in their church services, usually speak Arabic at home, even if coming from Iran. Arabic is taken to be their ethnic language

**11** The Jewish ethnic languages — Hebrew, Ladino and Yiddish — are here taken together as the Jewish ethnic language

**12** 'Other' ancestry includes small N.E.S.B. groups such as Belgians, Bengalis, Romany gypsies, etc.)

**13** 'Unknown' ancestry includes 'Unknown', 'Mixed' and Unclear

**14** North American — Mix includes French Canadians, about 1,000 of whom in Australia answered the ancestry question as 'French Canadian' or 'Canadian French'; however, less than 250 persons of North American ancestry used French as their home language

**15** South African includes about 1,000 persons giving their ancestry as Afrikaner and 12,500 giving their ancestry as South African. Because well over four-fifths of the 13,500 total use only English at home, including those of the 1st generation, they have here been placed with the English speaking peoples

**16** N.E.S.B. (Non English speaking background) excludes 'Celts', 'English-speaking', 'Unknown', 'Australian' and 'Not Stated'

Speaking generally, western Europeans, Pacific Islanders and South Asians (here excluding Pakistani and Bangladeshi who were small in number and put with 'Other') have been dropping their ethnic language relatively quickly, while southern Europeans, West Asians and Indochinese have been maintaining theirs quite strongly.

There is, however, considerable variation within these larger divisions. Amongst East Europeans, Ukrainians have maintained their ethnic language more strongly than comparable groups while Greeks, Croats, Serbs and Slav Macedonians have higher retention levels than other Southern Europeans, including those giving their ancestry as 'Yugoslav'. It seems here that persons claiming Croat, Serb or Macedonian ancestry feel more intensely about ethnic matters than those of their compatriots content to think of themselves simply as 'Yugoslav'.

> 'Some say that ethnic groups with a specific ethnic religion are more likely to maintain ethnic values, including language, longer than others.'

Some say that ethnic groups with a specific ethnic religion are more likely to maintain ethnic values, including language, longer than others. This could well be true of the Greeks, Serbs, Slav-Macedonians and Arabs. But it is less true for Armenians, Assyrians, Jews and Hindus; some of these have great loyalty to their ethnic religion but seem able to combine that with a transition to Australian-English. This is the same transition as that made earlier by Australia's German Lutheran settlers; for many decades some felt that true Lutheranism required the use of German but in recent years these families have discovered they can maintain their Lutheran faith quite adequately through using Australian-English.

Table 5 also gives interesting information about ethnic groups of English-speaking background. The Celtic statistics show very low levels of Celtic language usage, but this is not because Celtic immigrants drop their ethnic language very rapidly in Australia but because English has very largely displaced the ethnic language in their homelands. With the recent strengthening of moves to revive the Celtic languages and cultures, even in places such as Cornwall, it will be interesting to see if there are later any noticeable effects in Australia.

In the 'English-speaking' division there are some families of English and British ancestry who use a language other than English in their homes. Some are the result of mixed marriages, where the person claiming English descent has learned to use the non-English language of the spouse or parent. Others are persons of mixed origin – Anglo-Indian, say, who give English or British as their sole ancestry but in fact use another language at home.

Additionally, there are persons claiming 'Australian' ancestry who, by generation, are either I's or II's (2.5% of all 'Australians'). Some are of old British-Australian stock, born when their Australian-born parents were working overseas. Others are persons of non-English speaking birth or descent who still use a non-English language at home but who so want to identify as 'Australian' that they claim an Australian ancestry. This is particularly noticeable in the second generation where 30.7% use a language other than Australian-English at home.

Close examination of Table 5 reveals many more points of interest. These, however, are better left for another time, as is any examination of the Aboriginal language question. This can be examined through the returns of those identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in the direct census question, as well as through the Ancestry question, and it is better to analyse both sets of data together, along with the localities in which the Aboriginal people live.

Finally, we must remember that the Ancestry information is not perfect. In addition to difficulties mentioned earlier, nearly three million persons avoided specifying a precise overseas ancestry by claiming their ancestry was Australian, while just over one million did not answer the question at all. In both groups, however, the great majority were of third and subsequent generations, presumably of mainly Anglo-Celtic origin. In this sense the ancestry information on families of non-English speaking background is reasonably reliable and the information on language retention, at any rate of the I's, II's and II½'s, can be used with confidence.

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# Language and Economy in their Cultural Envelope

by ***J J Smolicz***

The French economist and Nobel Prizewinner, Maurice Allais, (1989, p.14) wrote recently that it is futile to expect effective solutions to the many problems facing European economic union, if there is no European cultural community among the participants. To succeed economically the union needs to develop a 'European spirit which can over-ride chauvinistic and particularist tendencies'. Such an European over-arching value system or 'spirit' is 'the preliminary condition for forging any real economic community'. In this way he formally places economy within its cultural envelope. But in doing so he does not advocate some artificial or forced imposition of cultural uniformity in all areas of life:

> *'If we wish to forge a genuine economic community and the political community on which it is dependent, if we want to achieve a real European humanism based on a fair balance among the various languages and cultures rather than on the domination of one language and one culture over the others, we will have to make sweeping reforms in the higher education system of each of our countries (...) The construction of Europe presupposes an ability to handle several languages, or at least three'.*

While he acknowledges the growing predominance of the English language, especially in the world of science and technology, he rejects the notion of English as the sole common medium of communication between Europeans (say, French and German or Spanish and Italian), since the 'language of a people constitutes a part of its soul' and its loss would jeopardise its culture. 'Over and above the question of defending our languages, it is really a matter of joining together to defend our cultures'. And the loss of these cultures would inevitably, he claims, deprive Europe of its political autonomy and economic viability.

Allais's fears of the 'hegemony' of the English language as a tool of 'Anglo-American domination' of Europe could be viewed as the rather petulant cry of a Frenchman disappointed at the decline of French as a modern international language. Nevertheless, his suspicion of linguistic uniformity as the prelude to loss of cultural autonomy and economic buoyancy may well be justified. As Tsuda (1986, p.49) confirms, 'Language is far from neutral, but it is actually a system of beliefs, values and interpretations emphasized and handed down in a certain culture.

►

European style delicatessen in Melbourne. *(Photo supplied by Centre of Immigration and Multicultural Studies)*

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Hence the adoption of a certain language leads to the dominance of that culture's practices and the submission to (its) other cultural values'.

Recent events in Eastern Europe and the virtual collapse of the economies of those countries show the futility not only of centralised economic planning but also of a rigidly controlled system that takes no account of regional linguistic variations or of the 'cultural envelope' of ethnic groups, other than the dominant one. When the dictatorial political controls in the USSR were relaxed, the subordinated peoples, even whole nations, reasserted their cultural autonomy, both for its own sake and as a necessary step in their quest for economic self-management. In the wake of perestroika, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have all taken gradual but inexorable steps to reclaim their cultural autonomy, with the greatest stress placed on making their ethnic tongues the official languages of these Soviet republics. This demand for linguistic and cultural autonomy has even taken precedence over the declaration of a policy of economic 'home rule', with claims of sovereignty over the republics' lands, forests, waters and mineral resources.

President Gorbachev could hardly oppose these 'Baltic reforms' in the face of the economic collapse of the former Russian-dominated system, based upon policies that took Lenin at his word by paying only lip service to the multi-ethnic population of the country, and giving hardly any regard to their varying linguistic, cultural and economic needs. In partially endorsing the Baltic republics' proposals, the central authorities are acquiescing in the growing conviction that the economy flourishes only when needless energy is now wasted on cultural suppression and, instead, the culture of the people is made to provide a springboard for economic activity.

'When the dictatorial political controls in the USSR were relaxed, the subordinated people, even whole nations, reasserted their cultural autonomy.'

In speaking about the need for a cultural and economic balance among the nations of the USSR, Gorbachev (July 1989) went so far as to say:

> *'The appropriate solution of these matters will to a large extent determine peace and prosperity of our people, the fate of perestroika and – if I can put it this way – the fate and integrity of our State.'*

Fears about the cohesion and resilience of the state if its cultural and economic problems remain unsettled appear justified in view of the tensions that are a legacy of the former period of suppression and stagnation, as witnessed by protests in the Caucasus and Uzbekistan. It would seem, therefore, that there are a number of very topical examples to act as a warning against the homogenisation of culture through the exercise of hegemony by the major group within a political union, since such dominance has proved to be counter-productive both economically and culturally.

## Language Policies in the European Community and Australia

As if in partial response to Allais's wish for a linguistic pluralism that would be internalized within each individual European, so that he/she could retain his/her cultural distinctiveness and yet be able to communicate with others, the European Commission has recently made important recommendations in relation to language learning. It has been agreed that in member countries of the European Community (EC), all secondary school students should be studying two EC languages, other than their own. The British government's own Education Reform Act of 1988 falls far short of this goal, and Mrs Thatcher has been criticized even within her own country and party for its limited vision.

'It has been agreed that in member countries of the European Community (EC), all secondary school students should be studying two EC languages other than their own.'

The British Act includes an Order on 'Modern Foreign Languages' (that came into force on 1 August 1989) with only one basic requirement, namely that 'all maintained schools' offer one of the EC languages. Although all pupils are obliged to study at least one language other than English, this is limited to years 7-9 of their schooling. This need not be an EC language in every case, since once the requirement to offer an EC language is met by the school, it may then offer its pupils other languages, which are selected either as being those of 'major trading partners' (such as Arabic or Chinese), or as those 'commonly used in ethnic communities' (such as Hindi or Punjabi).

Although the Act has been criticized in Europe for its limited scope in comparison with efforts of other members to foster linguistic pluralism within the Community, its provisions are even less favourable to Britain's own minority communities which may wish to have their languages included in the curriculum. The Act 'does not give pupils the right to demand' the inclusion of their home language in the curriculum (whatever their proportion in the school), while the school itself is only obliged to provide instruction in an EC language (Department of Education and Science (UK, 1989).

> '. . . current policies may be viewed as generally quite positive to the notion of additive bilingualism at an individual level.'

The situation in Australia differs from that of the European Community in that while in Europe there is no one single 'mainstream' language which is shared by all Europeans. Australian multiculturalism finds its 'spirit' reflected in an over-arching framework of values, including a shared language, namely English (Smolicz, 1984; National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, 1989). Since the last war, Australian language, and culture policies have undergone a major evolution that have gradually taken cognisance of the changing demographic, economic and cultural composition of society. While there are variations between states, and fluctuations in the articulation of federal government approaches, current policies may be viewed as generally quite positive to the notion of additive bilingualism at an individual level. Students with English as their family language are being encouraged to acquire another language at school. Most recently, special emphasis has been placed on what has been termed 'trade' languages, which are generally assumed to be East Asian, particularly Japanese (Asian Studies Council, 1988). Students from minority ethnic non-English speaking background can ideally maintain their home language and develop literacy in it; opt for the study of a totally new language – whether European or Asian, or do both these things (Commonwealth Department of Education: Lo Bianco Report, 1987).

The new language policy is still, however, only at the embryonic stage, and it is already possible to discern some unfortunate misunderstandings, such as an artificial cleavage between 'mother tongue' development for 'minority ethnics', and 'Asia-literacy' programs for students from English speaking background. A certain confusion about goals and their erratic and uneven implementation in different States may also reduce the impact of such initiatives upon the predominantly monolingual character of the majority of the people. There is a paradox in the fact that Australia is fortunate in having English as the dominant (and national) language, which links it with the world-wide community of English speaking nations while, at the same time, the majority of its people are 'disadvantaged by a general lack of facility in other languages' (National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, 1989, p.39). Another paradox is that, while almost 87% of the population over the age of five speaks no other language save English in their homes (Clyne, 1988, p.22), some 370,000 people from among ethnic minority groups are grossly deficient in their knowledge of English.

Furthermore, there still appears insufficient acceptance of the need to make the study of a language other than English (LOTE) a compulsory subject, even though some states have formulated a variety of plans, such as an undertaking to provide at least one LOTE for all primary school students by 1995 (South Australian Ministerial Task Force on Multiculturalism and Education, 1984). According to the South Australian Director General of Education, Dr Ken Boston (1989) South Australia 'seeks to affirm and promote cultural and linguistic diversity for all students through the application of 'Culturally Inclusive Education'. This includes the expansion of existing LOTE programs in schools that already teach eighteen languages to one third of the State's primary and secondary school students. This expansion is to be achieved through almost trebling the number of LOTE teachers in 1990. It is also significant that the chief executive officer of South Australia's state schools affirmed as his Department's 'main priority', the 'mother tongue development of students', as well as the teaching of 'the total range of languages – including geopolitical, traditional and community' languages.

> 'Students from minority ethnic non-English speaking background can ideally maintain their home language and develop literacy in it.'

These developments at a school level find their reflection in higher education in an effort to improve the current dismal level of language education, with only about 4 per cent of undergraduates in South Australia studying a LOTE. Under the preliminary recommendations of the South Australian Institute of Languages Report (1989), 'all university and higher education students in South Australia would be obliged to study a second language for at least a year – either at a University or during the twelfth year of their schooling' (Donaghy, 1989). At the same time, South Australia's Second Report of the Enquiry into Immediate Post-Compulsory Education (Gilding Report, 1989) still shied away from making LOTE a compulsory subject for the South Australian Certificate of Education. In contrast, New South Wales seems determined to forge ahead and be the first State in Australia where a LOTE course becomes a required school subject, initially starting with year 7 students, and in 1993 exploring its extension to cover years 7 and 8 (New South Wales Department of Education, 1989, p.14). However, the extent to which such plans will be fulfilled by 1993 still remains unclear, since at present in the country as a whole less than 20% of school students study a language other than English. Indeed, 'until recent Government initiatives, the proportion studying languages in senior secondary and tertiary education had been in long-term decline'. (National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, 1989, p.39).

## The Culture-Economy Interface in Australia

Current Australian interest in the teaching of Asian languages can be traced to a growing recognition that the goal of economic efficiency cannot be divorced from its cultural context. The appreciation of the inter-dependence of economy and politics, on the one hand, with language and culture on the other, finds support in the popular press, as illustrated by a recent thoughtful analysis by P.M. McGuinness (1989, p.17). There is some debate about which particular aspect of culture is of greatest significance – when culture is understood as encompassing a variety of systems, be they political, social, economic or ideological (Znaniecki, 1968). Allais, as a Frenchman, has nominated the French language as the core of his culture. This linguistic core is seen as necessary to sustain the nation's identity and vital powers of creativity, as well as its economic well-being. Others might query whether the 'soul' of every nation invariably resides in its ethno-specific tongue, although it undoubtedly does in the case of the Baltic peoples.

The theory of core values argues that some ethnic groups are more language-centered than others, and that for some nations other cultural factors, such as a specific religion, social structure or racial affiliation may prove of greater core significance than language (Smolicz, 1981a; Smolicz and Secombe, 1989). Whatever the core, there is a strong case for the view that one way in which a nation can dominate over others, or one ethnic group over other groups within the same country, is by obliterating the 'competing' core values and reducing the subordinated cultures to domestic, non-literary remnants.

Such a conclusion is hardly novel for most of the nations of Asia which have experienced extended periods of colonial rule and whose cultures have been denigrated as 'inferior', 'old fashioned' or 'non-scientific', and hence unsuitable to catalyse economic development without the assistance of some European lingua franca and cultural know-how. The flourishing economy of N.E. Asia and the rapid strides in the South-East part of the continent indicate the ethnocentric error of such views. In the early settlement days of Australia even more sinister labels were applied to the Aboriginal cultures, as well as those of non-British settlers which were perceived as a handicap and a burden to be shed as soon as possible. The danger has been that it was the core values that were being shed, in a way that endangered the culture's integrity, its creative powers, and its ability to sustain the intellectual and economic effort of youth (Smolicz, 1981b).

How much of the current 'multicultural concerns', and particularly the desire to arrest the wastage of talent of migrants, has been due to the increasing appreciation of the social and economic benefits of multiculturalism, a reduced demand for unskilled labour, or the desire for social justice, is difficult to ascertain. It is sufficient to say that 'multicultural programs' could be viewed as a delayed 'reflex action' to the growing realization that, at least in part, Australia's current economic difficulties can be ascribed to failure to recognize new world demands for superior knowledge and to arrest the wastage of overseas-derived skills. A Minister in the South Australian government described this delay in Australia's response as, 'our cultural blinkers, a colonial hangover which tied our ways of thinking about and dealing with the world to Australia's English-speaking roots' (Sumner, 1988, p.12). In order to reverse the decline, Australia has to increase the role of its manufacturing sector by placing greater emphasis on developing its human resources.

> '. . . in the country as a whole less than 20% of school students study a language other than English.'

Another goal about which there is general agreement is the need for a more successful and customer-sensitive trade policy which can be supported by the intelligent use of Australia's diverse cultural assets.

Such shortcomings cannot be made good simply by the recognition among employer groups and trade unions of the real gains that can accrue from 'on-the-job' English training, in terms of increased

Non-English speaking background entrepreneurs have diversified Australia's small business. Lebanese nutshop in Melbourne. *(Photo supplied by Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies)*

productivity, greater job satisfaction and reduced tensions in the workplace. Vital as such English language training is, and however vigorously it is promoted in the name of multiculturalism, when taken alone, it still fails to liberate and make use of the linguistic resources other than English, which remain locked within the multi-ethnic workforce. In fact, the diversity of knowledge, which is inherent in Australia's multicultural base, should provide the best springboard for successful trading with our partners in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere. This is because Australian society itself, where cultures constantly interact and more than one language is spoken for the purpose of communication and wealth creation, represents the best possible training ground for dealing with a multicultural world market.

The view that if Australia neglects its 'internal' multi-culturalism, it can hardly succeed in the external pluralistic environment, has been most clearly articulated by Sumner (1988, p.12) when he asserted:

> *'We need to challenge the insular view of life that Australians have retained for too long. Through ... recognizing that Australia must play its part in an increasingly integrated world economy, we face the challenge of giving life and substance to a multicultural community within our own country. For how, ultimately, do we deal with a multicultural world market and community, if at home we fail to deal effectively in social, political and economic terms with our own cultural diversity?'*

Despite such clarion calls for the full realization and integration of all Australians' various skills and intellectual attributes, whether acquired inside the country or elsewhere, there still remains a substantial pool of immigrants, both tradespeople and professionals, who are not working in jobs for which they were trained overseas. Furthermore, according to the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia (1989, p.26), 'that number is growing annually'. They are prevented from entering professions, trades and jobs for which they were trained, by various factors including language barriers, lack of opportunity for further study and work experience and the persistent reluctance to provide adequate recognition of overseas qualifications by a variety of professional and trade groups. Indeed, there is a paradox in that present Australian policy assesses potential immigrants on the contribution they make to the country's economic development; at the same time, it fails to ensure that those immigrants who are already settled in Australia actually make use of the skills acquired overseas for their own benefit, and for the benefit of all Australians.

The solution to this problem is a complex one and lies substantially outside the immediate reach of the Federal ministers and within the competence of State governments and professional organizations. However, in 1989, the Commonwealth government embarked on a comprehensive program of reform including the establishment of the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) and of the National Training Board to develop national training standards, accreditation processes, skills training and competence assessment. The aim of these two bodies, in liaison with the State authorities, is to improve access to education and training, including bridging and remedial training for the overseas qualified.

In this way the government's efforts to fund a series of ESL programs is being complemented by its National Policy on Languages, which supports the teaching of LOTE through its Australian Second Language Learning Program. This double-pronged linguistic effort and other culture-oriented measures might signal a new appreciation that effective economic initiatives are best planned within society's multicultural envelope and its over-arching values (Smolicz, 1984, 1989). For such reasons there is a need to reassess the benefits (as well as setbacks) which have flowed from the multicultural and language policies that successive Australian governments have tried to develop.

## Languages in Australian Multiculturalism

Following the Whitlam years, multicultural policies gained official acceptance through their personal advocacy by Malcolm Fraser, (1981), when he spoke about,

> *'ethnic cultural differences set within a framework of shared fundamental values which enables them to co-exist on a complementary rather than competitive basis.'*

The culture of each group was to be given the opportunity to contribute at least some of its elements to the country's heritage and hence to exert an influence upon the future development of Australia's overarching framework of values (Smolicz, 1984). There were also moves to take advantage of the linguistic resources of the country, represented by those bilingual individuals who, in addition to English, spoke what has come to be termed as 'community languages other than English' (CLOTE) (Clyne, 1982, 1988).

There are good reasons why former fears of Australian bilinguals being divisive should lose much of their former force. Objections to the continued existence of languages other than English have stemmed from misgivings that their purpose is to supplant English. There has been insufficient recognition of the real objective, namely a desire to foster additive bilingualism (or even multilingualism), by enabling young Australians to internalise an important aspect of multiculturalism within their minds and hearts. All research evidence points to the fact that English has been accepted as an unquestioned part of the overarching system of values (Marjoribanks, 1979, 1980) – a situation that has been previously noted as distinguishing Australia from the European Community, where no one single language can make that claim.

Over recent years, other languages have been gaining acceptance alongside English. In this way people have been given the opportunity to participate in the mainstream of Australian life, while acquiring literacy in other tongues, some of which they already speak in their homes, but which they can also use in their businesses in Australia and with their trading partners overseas. This has given rise to a more positive image of Australian bilinguals, and the role which they can play as cultural bridges that link different communities within Australia with those overseas, thus conferring important economic as well as socio-cultural benefits upon the country.

Economic benefits have seemed to be linked to cultural and civic advantages as well, since, rather than being frustrated due to illiteracy in their home tongues, those who took advantage of the increased teaching of community languages in schools often considered themselves to be the proud possessors of two or more literary heritages which enabled them to contribute creatively to Australian society in a variety of fields and walks of life, including trade and economics. The image of the 'home language' as invariably a handicap, rather than as an advantage, has been brought into question by the results of a large scale quantitative study conducted by Power in South Australia in 1986 and subsequently analysed by Robertson. This showed that 'where a language other than English was spoken by a parent, that particular characteristic had a positive and strongly significant effect on the propensity to apply to enrol in a tertiary education institution' (Blandy, 1988, p.34).

> '. . . Australian society itself, where cultures constantly interact and more than one language is spoken for the purpose of communication and wealth creation, represents the best possible training ground for dealing with a multicultural world market.'

There exists yet another reason why Australia can afford to indulge in supporting linguistic pluralism with greater confidence than many countries in Europe and elsewhere. The reason lies in Australia's unique position in the world as a continent governed by a single political entity. Furthermore, there has been no suspicion that the linguistic and cultural demands of any minority linguistic group shrouded political motives of separatism or secession, since Australian territorial integrity has never been in doubt. This acceptance of linguistic pluralism as a positive aspect of Australian society seems to represent an 'affordable tolerance' for the country as a whole. In this regard Australia differs from the USSR where the overarching framework of values based upon Lenin's (let alone Stalin's) interpretation of Marxist theory, is increasingly questioned (Kolack, 1987, p.38), and where ethnolinguistic forces tend to be centrifugal and carry with them an unmistakable territorial threat of whole nations seceding from the Union.

## An Aboriginal View of Multiculturalism

Australia's growing self-confidence and the gradual acceptance of LOTES within Australian society have also had its effect upon Aboriginal people. Many (if not most) of their spokespeople have remained aloof from the multicultural 'movement' because of their long-ingrained suspicion of the way even the finest sounding government policies 'have turned out to be something else' at the implementation level. As the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia (1989, p.15) formally states, 'unwitting systematic discrimination occurs when cultural assumptions become embodied in society's established institutions and processes' – and it is these processes that can impede even the most progressive reform. Where attitudinal barriers are compounded by structural impediments, such as the lack of access to education and training – they discriminate against Aboriginals in their ability to study within their own terms of reference, which include their own languages and cultures. Such educational handicaps have limited Aboriginals' ability to influence the decisions that affect them, reinforcing the unequal distribution of economic resources and power (Gale et al. 1987).

Nevertheless, in the new climate created by policies of multiculturalism, Aboriginality, too, has increasingly become more than a matter of race, by extending its focus to include culture and language. As Dr Eve Fesl, (1988) Director of Koorie Research Centre at Monash University and the first Aboriginal woman to hold a PhD from an Australian University, put it to an audience consisting principally of non-Aboriginal Australians of non-English speaking background:

> *'Before you came under post-war immigration schemes, we were the only large group of peoples who were seen to be different. Because we were not English, we were made to feel ashamed, of our languages, of our cultures, and we were indoctrinated into feeling ashamed of the colour of our skin.*
>
> *When you, your parents, and your grandparents arrived, you dared to speak in public, a language other than English, although you were the recipients of abuse, as we had been for decades.*
>
> *By your example of showing pride in your heritage and (ignoring) those who said that to be different to Anglo-culture was deficit, you made us reconsider OUR position, as to develop in ourselves a pride in being different. You helped us to relearn not be be ashamed of our cultures, our languages and to be proud of being Black.'*

Dr Fesl (1989a) has just completed a pilot project on the teaching of Aboriginal languages in schools, with the aim of reversing the trend towards extinction which all these languages continue to display. It is her hope that Aboriginal people (or Koories in her terminology), will no longer be 'assimilated into becoming second class citizens [who are expected to] provide a menial workforce for the settlers', or be socialized into the white 'work ethic'. It is still the reality, however, that in the few schools where Aboriginal languages are being taught, these are often not the languages spoken by the Aboriginal children attending that particular school. Moreover, they are often taught within the context of a social studies curriculum by white teachers who tend to rely upon Aboriginal teacher-aids to help them teach the Aboriginal language components.

'Objections to the continued existence of languages other than English have stemmed from misgivings that their purpose is to supplant English.'

Dr Fesl (1989b) sees as the greatest threat the 'pidginisation of the languages, by basing their teaching on the English word order'. It must, nevertheless be a matter of satisfaction to see the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia (1989, p.37) declare that the twenty Aboriginal languages (which are classified as still 'healthy') 'need to be accorded a pre-eminent position [since] it is through the preservation of spoken language that the cultural integrity of Aboriginal Australians can be maintained and developed'. No other minority tongue, not even German or Italian, has received such unstinted official recognition of its importance as an integrating function in the life of a group of Australians. But the Koorie people, such as Eve Fesl, will now be watching for the actual implementation of these fine sentiments.

## Language Education and Multiculturalism

People associated with the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA) were, rather like the Aboriginals, disappointed at the way at least some of Fraser's multicultural reforms were being implemented, especially in relation to education. While there was some degree of Federal government funding for part-time 'ethnic schools', as community-sponsored language teaching institutions (Norst, 1983), as well as an increase in funding

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for the teaching of some languages (such as Greek and Italian) in mainstream schools, support for the teaching of community languages throughout the educational system remained rather half-hearted.

Some leaders of the majority group were never convinced about the economic benefits of cultural and, especially, linguistic pluralism. To them the modest funding of community-owned ethnic schools appeared the cheapest way to teach these languages, while keeping the minorities 'happy'. This happiness was not universal, since there were fears that such privatisation of language education would lead to its marginalisation. What is more, a suspicion lurked that restrictions placed upon the teaching of languages in mainstream schools were more than an economy measure, but designed to leave the majority group 'undisturbed'.

'The culture of each group was to be given the opportunity to contribute at least some of its elements to the country's heritage . . .'

This ambivalence toward cultural pluralism was not a new thing in the Australian heritage, but had shown itself from the beginning of the British settlement. In this sense Whitlam's and Fraser's espousing of multiculturalism was a reactivation of the more pluralist climate at the end of the nineteenth century, when there was a flourishing press in languages other than English (especially German), and over a hundred bilingual schools operating (Clyne, 1985). This efflorescence of pluralism was not suppressed by any internal danger of ethnic fragmentation, but rather by the imported xenophobia that was an echo of the conflict between the nations of Europe during World War I and later World War II (Selleck, 1980). Even in the current decade this ethnocentric tradition has tended to demonstrate its continued existence, although admittedly in much more muted and diverse form (Blainey, 1986, 1989).

Another misinterpretation of multiculturalism limits it to no more than the preservation of 'ethnic identity'. This approach fails to recognize that the 'feeling of belonging', in order to last, has to be transmitted to subsequent generations, in a way that amounts to more than romantic musings on the past. To perpetuate itself and retain its meaning, ethnic identity needs a solid cultural substratum – and one which only the core of the culture concerned can supply. In the case of language-centered cultures, such as Greek, Polish, Latvian, Vietnamese – the communities concerned, in order to survive and contribute to multi-cultural Australia, have no alternative but to insist on the teaching and use of their languages. While it is recognised that language education is more costly than folkloric festivals, it is also accepted that the elimination of linguistic cores reduces the cultures concerned to ethnic remnants or empty shells that lack creative potential or economic value (Skutnabb Kangas, 1984; Smolicz and Secombe, 1988, 1989). Hence the ultimate cost to the community of the less of cultural resources following assimilation is likely to be far greater than the cost of education in community languages.

Comparative studies on plural societies confirm that cultural assimilation instead of increasing social mobility may actually be used to ensure economic dependence of the minorities which, in turn, may stimulate feelings of frustration, leading either to separatism or violence. Such violence was experienced in South Africa in Soweto in 1976 'when Black students protested against a requirement that their lessons be taught in Afrikaans' (Perlez, 1989). It was the imposition of the dominant tongue upon unwilling subordinate ethnic groups that triggered riots in which 575 people were killed. In Australia, this sense of frustration has been felt most keenly by Aboriginal communities. Hence their current attempt to escape their former economic and cultural subservience (Fesl, 1988) by engaging in a painstaking process of 'reconstruction as well as adaptation'. As Jordan (1984) puts it, Aboriginal peoples 'must sift and revivify the practices of the Aboriginal Law, the authority structures and the song cycles, and recreate an Aboriginal world of meaning within which a secure identity may be established'. The European and Asian derived minority communities in Australia would prefer to safeguard themselves against a similar fate, and to maintain their existing core values, rather than subsequently reconstruct, their lost heritages.

'Some leaders of the majority group were never convinced about the economic benefits of cultural and, especially, linguistic pluralism.'

It remains the wish of ethnic organizations to help minority ethnic Australians to preserve their dignity, *to be themselves*, and to enter Australian society, not empty handed, but bearing cultural gifts, some of them directly convertible into economic terms – chief among them being their linguistic resources. Maintenance of cultural continuity makes economic sense by building upon the languages which are already being used in many Australian homes, and thereby unlocking the bilingual potential of one eighth of the nation (Clyne, 1988).

## Australian Multiculturalism within the Asian Context

Given the federal structure of Australia and the differences among the States, one cannot speak of uniformity in multicultural policies, although policies adopted by the Commonwealth can set the tone for the whole country. In 1988 the Prime Minister (Hawke, 1988, September 16.) acknowledged the cultural dimension of Australian ethnic diversity when he called for 'basic rights of freedom from discrimination, equality of opportunity, the development of language skills, and the fostering of the rich variety of our cultural traditions'.

There is every hope that in the future such statements will be reflected more clearly at the implementation level, so that funding is directed to languages spoken in the Australian community, as well as to those languages which are labelled as 'trade', and 'Asian', and which are almost invariably assumed to be 'non-community' and foreign. The narrowness of this interpretation of economic relevance is based upon the simplistic belief in a direct relationship between a smattering of some foreign language and an automatic trade surplus with the country concerned. This 'trade aspect' is often given as a reason for diverting resources from Asian community languages, such as Vietnamese or Khmer, which perversely seem hardly 'Asian', in terms of the current drive for 'Asia literacy'. To insist on regarding 'Asian' as synonymous with 'trade', and then select Chinese as a *foreign* language, is to ignore the presence in Australia of some 140 000 Australians who use a Chinese language as their home tongue, (Jupp, 1988, p.971), and for whom it has a 'community', rather than 'foreign' (or simply 'trade') connotation. The significance of Chinese for trade is in fact partly *because* it is also 'community' – a name that indicates that the Australian traders concerned can readily communicate with their former Asian homeland, whose 'cultural envelope' of customs and ways of life they understand. (Smolicz, Lee, Murugaian and Seccombe, 1990).

The particular label given to a language could be dismissed as being of no particular importance, but its practical implications become clear in the educational arena. In this regard some higher educational institutions ignore the pedagogic problem of distinguishing between the needs of those who start from scratch and those who already speak a particular language in their homes (even if they use its dialect form and may initially lack literacy in it). The approach that is frequently adopted at a university level is to organise the teaching of Chinese as if all the students were absolute beginners; furthermore, the 'foreign language' assumption ignores not only the native speakers, but also disregards the probability that an increasing number of students (from whatever ethnic background) have studied it at school, and possibly have matriculated in it. It stands to reason that to ignore the cultural resources which Chinese speakers represent in Australia flies in the face of the goals of economic development and an increase in trade relations with Asia.

The case of 'foreign language' labelling illustrates the contention that when economic goals are stripped of their cultural context, the goals themselves are undermined in the process. The economic and cultural losses are in this instance sustained together. The cultural context of multicultural Australia is being sacrificed along with the country's greater chances of economic growth, for the sake of satisfying tacitly held ethnocentric forebodings about permanent Asian residents in Australia, which are an echo of some of the least attractive episodes from the past that fed on fears of 'alien ethnicity' (Selleck, 1980; Harmstorf, 1983). Indeed, the denial of the significance of the cultural envelope in economic growth may be more apparent than real, since it takes the Anglo-Celtic complexion of that envelope as a given. Indeed, its normality is so all-pervading that it hardly needs any explanation or mention. The presupposition of a fixed Anglo-Australian cultural envelope and neglect of its multicultural complexity is detrimental to the needs of the economy, which also coincides with the legitimate aspirations of a large proportion of Australians from other ancestries who desire to maintain their cultural and linguistic heritages.

Latent ethnocentrism may be perceived as overriding the potential economic benefits of plurality in the attitudes of those protagonists of Asian languages who are not overly concerned with extending the hand of friendship to Asian Australians by building upon their linguistic and cultural resources. Similar subterranean springs seem to feed the attitudes that have surfaced periodically during bouts of the so-called 'migrant debate' in relation to the ethnic composition of the intake. In 1988 the Prime Minister himself warned that the drop of applicants from Asia (especially from Hong Kong and Malaysia) under the Business Migration Scheme, was probably due to the negative overtones in that year's migration debate. There is a danger that a similar, if unintended, impression may be created even by such a well meaning report, as that produced by the Asian

Studies Council (1988). This could be unfortunately misinterpreted as implying that we are almost entirely an Anglo-Saxon nation which must finally wake up to being geographically in Asia and start acquiring 'Asia knowledge', in the form of foreign languages and other 'Asia-related skills'.

There is little doubt that Asian confidence in Australia depends partly upon the way Australian internal multicultural policies are implemented. A clear statement on the need to develop *internal* resources in Asian languages and cultures, as an important contribution to interaction with Asian nations, would reassure our neighbours that Australia is genuine in its relationship with them. Australia could then set about implementing the recommendations on developing 'Asia-related skills' with greater confidence about the success of such ventures. A request that some three-quarters of Australian company executives with Asian businesses, together with most of their marketing staff, should have such skills by 1995-2000, could then be taken in the context of greater appreciation of the skills and experiences of Australians from a variety of Asian cultural backgrounds.

It would seem that unless the 'internal' multicultural reality is fully utilized as part of Australia's attempts to come closer to Asia, the 'external' cultural and educational efforts may prove inadequate to meet the hopes that are currently placed in them. The learning of Asian languages as 'foreign' tongues by whole cohorts of pupils at an elementary level may have less impact on economic development and on the complexity of trade pathways than is expected by the advocates of such a massive, though only moderately funded program. Such a program may in fact prove no more successful than former British efforts to master the language of their much closer neighbour and trading partner – France! In commenting upon the Ingelson Report (Inquiry into the Teaching of Asian Studies and Languages in Higher Education, 1989, para 4.11), the Chairman of the Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Adelaide, (McCormack, 1989), noted that 'the system which is to be hugely expanded offers students an average of 504 contact hours of instruction [in Japanese] over three years, while the best available evidence suggests a minimum of 2 400 hours is necessary, i.e. approximately five times the current practice'.

South American entertainers. *(Photo by Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies)*

'. . . a language should not be taught "naked", stripped of the cultural envelope which is so important in understanding Asian society and economy.'

Doubts about an increasingly mass-production oriented strategy which does not offer the opportunity of functional fluency in the language, and divorces language from culture studies, have caused McCormack (1989) to express his scepticism about the effectiveness of some of the policies advocated in the Asia Council and Ingelson reports. He fears that only a tiny proportion of students encouraged by the reports to undertake studies of an Asian language is likely to achieve '. functional linguistic competence, true literacy':

> *'The expectation of improved economic performance flowing from expanded Asian language programmes should be weighed against the possibilities of contracts bungled, treaties misunderstood and diplomatic incidents occasioned by incompetents pushed forward to justify the programme; losses might outweigh gains (at the "front-line" level).'*

## The Unlocking of Australia's Linguistic Resources

These cautionary comments should not be interpreted as an invitation to adandon Australia's drive for increased language education, but as admonition against hasty improvisation. The danger is that unless the program is soundly based it could become a fad, to be discarded after the initial ethusiasm wears off. In the first instance, a language should not be taught 'naked', stripped of the cultural envelope which is so important in understanding Asian society and economy. There is a need for properly qualified teachers who are attuned to the various abilities and interests of students – whether native speakers of the tongue concerned; those who have studied the language from an early date, or those who are starting it from scratch. In this regard, Australia is in a better position than mono-cultural societies that lack our linguistic resources, which need only to be developed in order to maximise the benefits of bilingualism for each individual, and for the country as a whole.

As Lo Bianco (1989, p 12) points out, the educational task to achieve this vision of multiculturalism must involve the refinement and direct utilisation of the linguistic resources and skills of students, some of whom bring their bilingualism from home to school. These resources could be of value to Australia.

> *'either as an enriched base from which students could acquire the specific cultural and language skills which are in demand but which are not widely available among the population (e g Japanese), or they would be of direct use if they coincide with practical economic needs (e g Chinese, Indonesian, Italian, Spanish and German).'*

To achieve the desired goals, Lo Bianco (pp 13-15) advocates the construction of a curriculum with an internationalist orientation that builds upon the existing pluralism of skills and knowledge over which students have mastery.

> *'The repertoire of such a curriculum involves both linguistic and cultural elements (...) Students must be able to be linguistically competent for the communication demands of the modern world, or the region of the world with which their society identifies, in Australia's case, Europe, and increasingly Asia. This means the learning of at least one additional language (...)*
>
> *For non-English speaking background children (...) the international perspective extends the repertoire further. It could do this by requiring the learning of an Asian language, Esperanto, or additional major world language. It ought to aim, however, to extend an existing repertoire rather than replacing components of it with a dominant and imposed language. By doing this it will be empowering students with a linguistic "range" appropriate to the full gamut of possible socio-cultural contexts.'*

Spanish Dancer. *(Photo courtesy of Australian Information Service)*

From this perspective, school language programs are to be regarded in Hawkins' terms as an 'apprenticeship' in language learning since a bilingual learner is assumed to have an additional capacity for successfully acquiring other languages which may become nationally significant at some future date. This also applies to bilingualism and biculturalism acquired in the home, since these attributes can predispose individuals not only to deepen the knowledge they already possess but to go further and acquire additional linguistic and cultural skills that society needs for its trade and economic purposes.

The former South Australian Minister of Ethnic Affairs (Sumner, p 12) offered a clear directive for the future development of the cultural and linguistic resources that are currently locked within Australia's multi-ethnic population.

> *'There is little doubt that the major international phenomenon of the next twenty years and beyond will be increasing inter-dependence in all its facets ... This will involve recognizing the social and economic advantages our multicultural community gives Australia. All this means investing in our cultural base, in maintaining our linguistic and cultural diversity through a national languages policy, and placing much greater value on developing our human capital resources. In an*

*increasingly inter-dependent world if you speak another language you have an asset which should not be lost. Australia has that asset.'*

Sumner's and Lo Bianco's arguments that a plural cultural base already exists in Australia and is fundamental to Australia's economic, as well as social development finds an echo in postulates advanced by the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia (1989). It lists the economic costs that can arise where members of a multicultural society fail to communicate across cultures, a point made earlier in relation to the European Community. This cost 'may manifest itself in the frustration of youthful talent in the classroom, and in friction or misunderstanding in the workplace'. An even greater economic cost may be paid by a society where 'incidents of prejudice, antagonism and hostility occur based on racial and cultural differences' (Agenda *Focus* 1989, p.3). The Agenda (p.15) acknowledges that any signs of prejudice and tension may have detrimental effects not only inside, but also outside the country, since 'there may be an immediate cost in terms of overseas perceptions of Australia', and hence an effect on both its migration program and trade relations.

> 'The majority of Australians from minority linguistic backgrounds are bilingual, more than one in four of them being Australian-born.'

The National Agenda (*Focus*, 1989, p.3) also laments the long neglect of the multicultural context of Australian society in that, 'The potential of two million Australians (immigrants and their children, as well as Aboriginals) who already speak a second language goes almost unrecognized and unutilized'. The majority of Australians from minority linguistic backgrounds are bilingual, more than one in four of them being Australian-born. The Agenda (1989, p.40) notes that, 'the potential national benefits of this resource are little understood [and that] this capital investment in language is often dependent on the family home and after-hours ethnic schools'. By neglecting these languages in the cultural sense, Australia has been harmed from an economic point of view, most conspicuously through the loss of potential to facilitate trade with the rest of the world.

Acknowledging the fact that one in four members of the Australian workforce are first and second generation migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, the present government's newly declared multicultural policy adopts a triple goal. In this, the right of people to maintain their *cultural heritage* and receive *equal treatment* and *opportunity* are linked to the need for *economic efficiency*, perceived as the development and full use of the skills and talents of all Australians, whatever their cultural or racial background.

For their part, ethnic minority groups have themselves contributed to evolving a model of multiculturalism compatible with the Agenda's goals, in that it is grounded in their own cultures, but also set in the wider Australian social and economic context. This seeks to ensure that ethnic cultural maintenance is not used as a reason for disadvantaging the minorities in the social and occupational fields. Instead, it can act as a catalyst for the economic development of the whole society (Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia, 1985).

The policies advocated by the Agenda are most likely to succeed economically and to satisfy the aspirations of all sections of the community, if they release the full range of human resources that remain encapsulated within the multicultural envelope of Australian society.

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# A Hard-nosed Multiculturalism: Revitalising Multicultural Education?

by **Joseph Lo Bianco**

## Introduction

A decade and a half of concerted advocacy that the cultural and linguistic diversity of the population (see appendix one) should thematically pervade mainstream curricula in Australia's schools has been only partially successful. Although very creditable advances have been made in the provision of educational programs promoting bilingualism and biculturalism among minority children, the mainstream is still somewhat unaffected. Multicultural education is often still perceived as a residual task and a marginal issue – unless it is synonymous with teaching specialist English to immigrant background children, when it can sometimes assume a central importance in educational debates.

As a broader social ideology promoting a systematic reconceptualisation of Australian identity, multiculturalism is now incorporating a more pragmatic, 'hard-nosed', national-interest rhetoric into its discourse. This is an attempt to embrace and incorporate notions of national interest, and to become associated with mainstream societal objectives, by appropriating the current language of 'national reconstruction'. The limited success of sustained advocacy of multicultural practices for the educational mainstream has led to a lingering perception among some that multiculturalism is nothing other than an ideology constructed by political interests to assuage and 'get on side' ethnically based lobby groups.

> 'Is the cultural and linguistic learning by minority background children only for the "inward looking" — purposes of heritage and tradition, or for more externally oriented and more societally valued purposes?'

A sign of failure for multiculturalism as a broad and all encompassing social ideology, attempting to become the organising concept for linguistic and socio-cultural education, is that it could not anticipate and was unable to incorporate other curriculum change movements which followed it, or were of its contemporary – especially Asian studies, Australian studies and Aboriginal studies – into a comprehensive pluralistic orientation for educational policy and practice. As Smolicz has observed:

> *'If the majority group wishes to avoid fragmentation of education along ethnic lines, then it must recognise that a policy of residual multiculturalism in the mainstream schools, combined with the encouragement of separatism through the support of part-time or full-time ethnic schools, must be subjected to a fundamental revision. A full-scale multicultural education program, involving the application of a national language policy to all levels of education, appears as the only realistic solution for a plural society. This represents the most effective way to achieve a state of stable multiculturalism in which overarching values are given an opportunity to develop in harmony with the ethnic values of the constituent groups'.*
>
> (Smolicz 1984:22)

That the educational response to the existence of a remarkably high degree of demographic pluralism has not generated the hoped-for pervasive influence on mainstream education (whatever other achievements it might have accomplished) is due to at least three persistent handicaps:

1.0 the utilisation of inadequate notions of culture
2.0 an inability to reconcile basic, divergent goals, and
3.0 the public private divide

### 1.0 The notion of culture

The 'taken-for-granted' notion of culture which characterises many policy documents on multicultural education has been a hindrance to practitioners in education, especially to teachers and curriculum writers. The usual approach has been to attempt to impart knowledge to students about observable aspects of the cultures and sub-cultures which comprised the school's population. A major problem with this is that it doesn't easily lead to a generalised appreciation of the specific culture nor of a broader socio-cultural awareness. But even when definitions of culture were offered in policy documents they have not always helped. As Sachs has observed:

> *'Multicultural policy documents have weaknesses in two major areas: the conceptions of culture used lack a critical edge that might direct multicultural education towards socially transformative actions; the conceptions of culture have a curiously outdated feel to them so that there appears to be a gap between the theoretical positions of the documents and what is taken to be culture theory in the 1980s'. (1989:19)*

For Sachs these problems derive from the utilisation of notions of culture in one of two ways: either as being the equivalent of 'heritage' or of: 'omnibus definitions of culture [which] focus on the way that culture permeates every aspect of human experience'. She agrees with Bullivant (1985) that 'to equate culture with heritage is a dangerous oversimplification as it ignores the adaptive and evolutionary nature of a groups' culture' (Sachs 1989:20). For Sachs the grab-bag' nature of many definitions of culture in Australian policy documents means that these documents 'must undergo a quite radical interpretive process as they are put into operation in schools and classrooms by teachers', implying a likely, or at least a possible, mismatch between the conceptions of culture, 'operated' by teachers, and that intended by the authors of policy documents. (Interestingly, her investigation of this issue found not a mismatch but a reasonably close coincidence of interpretation between the two).

> 'A new version of multiculturalism is emerging — it is evolving a new discourse which incorporates a more hard-nosed style.'

Perhaps a more serious deficiency of the prevailing notions of culture, whether explicitly stated in policy or just implied, is the 'non-generative' quality which, I would argue, is an almost universal feature (with the commendable exception of the Social Literacy Project in New South Wales). Reduced either to a focus on 'observable phenomena', and, especially, on material culture only, or, conflated to include every aspect of social life, the culture concept has not been able to be used as the powerful explanatory concept it could be in education for social awareness. It neither assists students to contrast their own background with the dominant societal values, in the case of minority children, nor does it get used effectively with majority children learning about diversity; thereby restricting the generalised, broader appreciation of why culture is produced, and what purposes it serves, which could otherwise result.

This deficiency has deprived multicultural education of the possibility of becoming an organising concept and a source for addressing the now manifestly important mainstream needs of Australian society. In recent years, these mainstream needs have been exemplified as Asian studies, Australian studies and Aboriginal studies. The broader population may have been convinced that cultural studies born out of the linguistic and cultural pluralism of the population was also 'for them' if it could have generated practical skills, knowledge, awareness and attitudes which they could identify as meeting the nation's contemporary needs, including its economic and external relations priorities. This has been the longer term effect of the inadequate notions of culture which have predominated in multicultural policy documents and, unfortunately, in some educational practice. The more immediate effects have been that too much of the classroom practice derived from such policies has been superficial, exotic to the general curriculum and, ultimately transient.

## 2.0 Irreconcilable goals

A second obstacle, inhibiting a wider role for multicultural education, has been the inability of its advocates to overcome a constant oscillation between two sets of seemingly irreconcilable goals. These have been formulated almost as polar opposites: one gives priority to the needs of ethnic minorities in programs specifically targeted to maximise their educational attainments and overcome disadvantage (i.e. an equity orientation), and the other gives priority to the cultural enrichment of the whole society, by focussing on identity and self-esteem issues for minorities (i.e. a culturalist orientation). The former has been stressed by critics of the Left; the latter has been preferred by conservatives.

An immediate effect of this has been a lack of coherence of focus and methodology, and disagreements about what constitutes the content and defines the boundaries of multicultural education. The longer term effect has been to contribute to the marginalisation of multicultural education and a lack of awareness of its capacity, as a concept, to carry other internationalist-oriented aspects of curricula. It would be wrong to imply that there have not been policy statements, practitioners and curricula which have transcended splits such as these. A series of policy documents in Victoria and South Australia in the early 1980s and the National Advisory and Coordinating Committee on Multicultural Education (NACCME) document at the Commonwealth level in 1987, as well as many programs in other states, have developed rigorous, comprehensive and pedagogically sound rationales. The point being made, however, is that the overwhelming impression received by key decision makers has been of a divided and ambiguous educational movement. This 'impression' led to the abolition in the 1986 Commonwealth budget of the Multicultural Education Program: the only federal government funding activity for promoting a pluralist education in the socio-cultural area of learning.

## 3.0 The public/private divide

By this I refer both to domains of life and to the venues of educational activity. Critics of multicultural education have often argued that cultural and linguistic maintenance for minorities is predominantly about effect and about 'life-style': to Bullivant (1981,1983) this would render it of not direct concern to the State. Schooling, according to this view, ought to be predominantly about the cognitive domain and about the 'life-chances' of individuals. ►

Pertinent to this discussion is the distinction between the vertical and horizontal axes of state and nation:

> *'The state is a vertical structure of public authority. It contrasts with the nation, which is essentially a horizontal network of trust and identity'.*
> (Enloe 1981:123)

The private domain, the horizontal axis of nation, is, according to the views of many critics of ethnically pluralist education, the proper place for activity directed at cultural and linguistic maintenance for ethno-linguistic minorities. The vertical axis is the realm of state and it is here that societal institutions concern themselves with the opportunities of advancement for individuals and the conferring of power. In addition to this sort of debate about the appropriate realm for minority education which deals with linguistic and cultural maintenance, there is another. In Australian education there is a high degree of public financial support for private schools: both full-time (including ethnically based schools) and part-time ethnic schools. Is the cultural and linguistic learning by minority background children only for the 'inward-looking' or community-directed purposes of heritage and tradition, or for more externally oriented and more highly societally valued purposes? The question is both about the appropriate location for such teaching and learning and about the appropriate target groups. These issues contain serious tensions and are the subject of constant and unresolved debate.

Exacerbating this issue has been the very clear evidence from sociolinguistic research that schools, to cite Fishman, are 'unreliable allies' of language maintenance:

> '. . . *a decade and a half of language maintenance research has conclusively demonstrated – in the US, in Ireland, in Wales, in Israel, in Scotland, in Friesland (Netherlands) and elsewhere – that the school is a rather unreliable ally of language maintenance leading appreciably and frequently in other directions*'. (Fishman 1977:47)

Influenced by academic opinion that the private domain was ultimately more likely to produce successful heritage maintenance, many community groups in Australia have argued that the private domain is also the more authentic and genuine context in which to nurture cultural learning and maintenance.

'Conducting successful trade in high, value-added manufactured products in countries which overwhelmingly do not use English, requires linguistic and cultural preparation . . .'

These three factors have inhibited the possibility that a pluralistic orientation to curricula would pervade all education as a result of the great cultural diversity of the population. Added to the fears of mainstream critics – admittedly a minority – who argue that social cohesion will be undermined by promoting multicultural approaches to schooling, these 'internal' handicaps have limited the success of educational change aimed at reflecting demographic pluralism in education.

## Recent developments

A new version of multiculturalism is emerging, attempting to transform these three obstacles to convert the educational face of multiculturalism into the pervasive influence over mainstream curricula which it desires. Already it is evolving a new discourse which incorporates a more hard-nosed style. To establish the broader role will require reconceptualising, (and gaining widespread support for) the desired educational response to ethnolinguistic diversity as being of direct benefit in attaining important goals which the society sets itself. Essentially, this means convincingly establishing the interdependence between: domestic linguistic and cultural pluralism, and the nation's manifest need for better skills in these areas, i.e. treating pluralism as a resource which assists the nation. Later I shall propose some concepts that could assist this task; for now I shall borrow a concept from Ruiz which he uses for describing various 'language planning orientations'. Ruiz argues:

> *'language policy development is embedded in one or more of three basic orientations: language-as-problem, language-as-right, and language-as-resource. Language-as-problem construes the targets of language policy to be a kind of social problem to be identified, eradicated, alleviated or in some other way resolved.*
>
> *Language-as-right often is a reaction to these sorts of policies from within the local communities*

> *themselves. It confronts the assimilationist tendencies of dominant communities with arguments about the legal, moral, and natural right to local identity and language; if refutes the notion that minority communities are somehow made 'better' through the loss of their language and culture . . .*
>
> *Language-as-resource . . . presents the view of language as a social resource; policy statements formulated in this orientation should serve as guides by which language is preserved, managed and developed.'* (Ruiz 1988:10-11)

This argument may be more applicable for languages than it is for cultural skills. It is apparent that government leaders in Australia have accepted that linguistic preparation intersects with the nation's needs, especially in the area of trade. Multiculturalism may be able to draw some sustenance from these developments in the mainstream, but the case still needs to be made. This somewhat self-interested rationale for language teaching could well lead to a revitalisation of the claims that pluralism in Australian education, by responding to the needs and rights of the constituent ethnolinguistic minorities, in a practical sense, helps meet the nation's needs too.

The earliest sign of the emergence of this idea is the construction of a new discourse about pluralism, utilising a (culture and) language-as-resource orientation, similar to that identified by Ruiz. This stresses the nature of the macro-economic and social problems of the society, and the talents and skills of the population in cultural and linguistic terms. The interdependence potential of these two is what is being advocated, i.e. the generative power of linguistic and cultural maintenance and new learning. Even Bullivant, a long time critic of multicultural education, now advocates a version of these new ways of seeing multiculturalism:

> *'A society develops, augments and evolves a program of knowledge, ideas and conceptions needed to cope with the environmental challenges it faces. These constitute its "survival program" or "blueprint" – in short its culture. In turn this must be passed on to subsequent generations to enable them to survive, through the "enculturation imperative" of which the education system is a part. But the survival values must be encoded in the cultural program in the first place; it may be difficult to bring them into it at a later stage in a society's evolution and harder still if the education system follows alien traditions that do not match the particular environmental challenges facing the society it serves.'*

He goes on to say:

> *'In Australia's case, by following British educational traditions, the education system may well be dysfunctional for aiding national survival in the Asia-Pacific Region, which inescapably poses environmental challenges far different from those Britain and its inward-looking Common Market Partners face'.* (1988:25-26)

## Asia and the Pacific and the brain-based recovery

The recurring features of the present conceptualisation of demographic pluralism are the following: that Asia and the Pacific are important to Australia's national interests in a way probably unlike the dynamic economies of this region are for other Western – or Europeanised-societies (i.e. in Australia's case they are neighbours too), and secondly, that the revolution in technology (communications/informations technology in particular) mean that the traditional mainstays of Australia's economic prosperity (abundant extractable commodities and rural produce) are no longer adequate to secure for the nation the standard of living to which it has become accustomed.

After decades of denial of Australia's need to accommodate to its geographical proximity to Asian non-English speaking neighbours, the harsh realities of severe terms of trade imbalances and high levels of foreign indebtedness have led to many statements like the following, by senior government Ministers:

> *'. . . our future is in Asia. We will either succeed in Asia or perish in it. We cannot change the reality of our geopolitical position and we therefore must face up to that reality and develop a positive strategy to ensure our survival and our future prosperity'.* (Dawkins 1988)

And the Prime Minister:

> *'It is no exaggeration to say that as we enter our third century one of the most important and testing challenges this country faces is the challenge of finding our true place in Asia – of recognising that our self-interest lies in our becoming an integral part of our region. . . . The assertion that Australia's future lies in Asia has become a commonplace of Australian political and commercial dialogue. But we are still learning to come to grips*

> *with the practical implications – the challenges and opportunities – of that assertion'*

and later:

> *'Indeed, it is recognition of the importance of languages and cultural understanding in developing our export and hospitality industries that has led the government to emphasise the economic significance of our multicultural policies'.*
> (Hawke 1988:8,10)

'. . . the resources 'locked up' in the community could be released to assist the nation in the urgent task of building itself a new economy, one which is internationalist and outward-looking.'

Conducting successful trade in high, value-added manufactured products in countries which overwhelmingly do not use English, requires linguistic and cultural preparation to accompany the industrial restructuring in progress. Such a broad and urgently expressed demand of the education system is unique in Australia's history.

The need for linguistic and cultural preparation is not solely for external trade, however.

The Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs recently produced a Discussion Paper: Towards a National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia in which it stated:

> *'The current policy of the Commonwealth Government emphasises three aspects of multiculturalism: respect for cultural differences, social justice and economic efficiency'.* (p.5)

And later, specifying further the economic element, the original part of this construction of multiculturalism, it states:

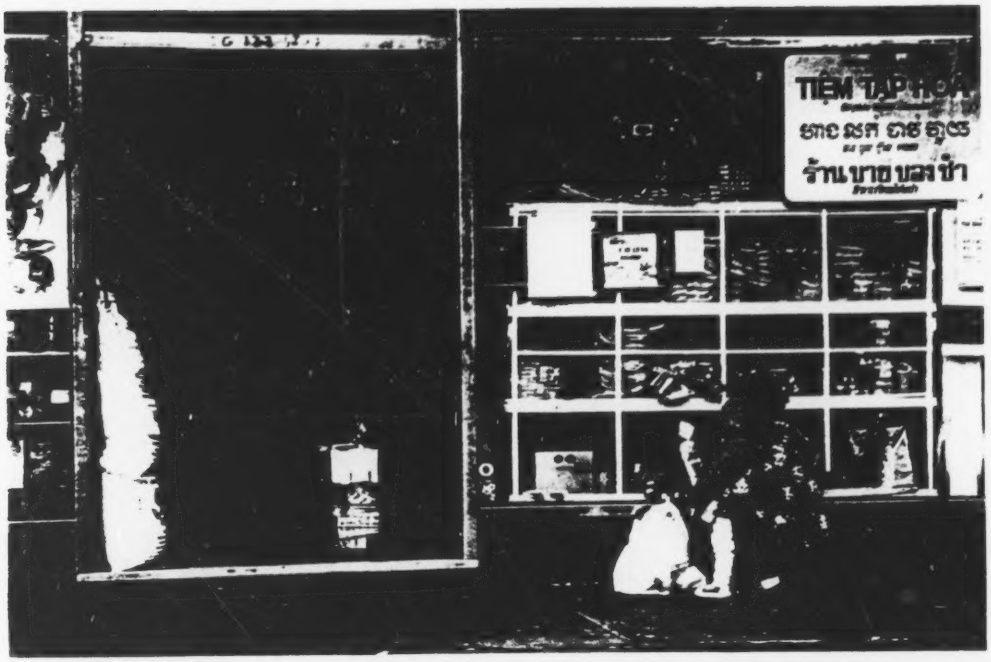
> *'The economic dimension of multiculturalism means that Australia should be able to make effective use of all the nation's human resources. This is particularly necessary in the current economic environment. Australia's future standard of living depends on increased efficiency and competitiveness. To achieve this we need to get the best from all members of our workforce, whether born here or overseas.*
>
> *Multicultural policy embraces such issues as the provision of appropriate retraining arrangements for those manufacturing industries with large immigrant workforces who now face the challenge of competition and technological change; increasing the school retention rates of Aboriginal Australians and certain ethnic groups; effectively managing a multicultural, multilingual workforce; making better use of the education, skills and entrepreneurial ability of immigrants by teaching English and recognising overseas qualifications; and maintaining and developing the language resources of our nation in order to advance Australia's trade and tourism interests.*
>
> *Such concerns go to the heart of contemporary economic priorities. They recognise that the cultural diversity of Australia is not a problem. Rather it gives us resources, provides us with assets, that can help to secure our future in an increasingly competitive world.'* (ACMA 1988:6)

Despite later claiming that 'the emphasis on the economic aspects of multiculturalism is not new,' it is unprecedented in both the degree of prominence which it is now accorded, and also new in that much of the economic flavour is that of treating cultural diversity as a *resource* to be utilised in 'reconstruction efforts' rather than as an aspect of social welfare costs, i.e. a cost in providing retraining programs for displaced workers. What is also new is that this dimension is now explicitly included among the eight basic goals for a multicultural Australia, compared to a previously dominant formulation of multiculturalism in which such dimensions were notable by their absence (see appendix 2).

'The equity rationale would also be addressed since minority children's backgrounds assume a new and more positively valued role.'

It is necessary to trace, albeit briefly, the evolution of policies on minority education, stressing the languages aspect of these, prior to assessing the prospects for the future of this more 'hard-nosed' version of multiculturalism, and language policy specifically, which is emerging (see Lo Bianco 1989, forthcoming).

Continued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The transformation of Australian cities into multilingual street-scapes points to the importance of multicultural education for domestic as well as international purposes. *(Photos supplied by Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies)*

## Three phases

During the early 1970s, as part of a more general movement of renewal and social change, there emerged the issue of social and occupational equality for migrants, and educational disadvantages experienced by their children. In her book *The Migrant Presence in Australia*, Martin has a graph plotting the number of government reports addressing this specific issue over several time periods. The graph rises almost vertically in the early 1970s.

These reports overwhelmingly used the 'discourse of disadvantage'. They characterised the 'migrant situation' as having several key, and seemingly permanent, elements: inequality equalling lack of English, equalling ethnicity, equalling urban inner city life, equalling manufacturing industry. Inequality through linguistic mismatch between the population and the governing and dominant institutions of the society was the overwhelming image communicated about the place of migrants in Australia. The programs which were proposed targeted immigrants or Aborigines only, the means for changing or ameliorating disadvantage was a linguistic one, i.e. the provision of English as a Second Language teaching to children and to adults. There were other elements but these were the dominant ones which sustained the image of inequality and dependence.

The achievements of this period were the establishment of the Child Migrant Education Program and the Aboriginal transitional bilingual programs in the areas of Commonwealth jurisdiction in education.

> 'But multiculturalism is yet to succeed in developing a set of goals, a discourse and related programs which could place it in the mainstream of education.'

Evolving out of this by the mid seventies, and firmly dominant by the late 70s, was a new discourse. This started by proposing cultural questions as the explanations for the situation of migrant children in schools, and ended up by targeting *not* ethnic communities, but the whole of society. A key symbolic act of this period was the renaming of 'ethnic' or 'migrant' languages as 'community' languages. This was a device to connote the greater immediacy of these languages to their learners, in an age when immediacy and relevance were all important in educational rhetoric.

This development revealed the strong attachment that many groups have to their languages – even when they begin to be dysfunctional in communicative terms, they retain and even increase in their symbolic value as emblematic of the groups' identity.

Social reasons for teaching these languages widely were put forward. These held that such teaching would lead to intercultural tolerance, to understanding and these completely unsupported, but tenaciously clung-to assertions, were added to dogmatic statements about how the teaching of these languages as language maintenance would overcome educational disadvantages experience by migrant children. Although it is now possible to specify sets of circumstances where these arguments hold true, there was then some blithe disregard of the need to qualify many of these assertions.

> '. . . by far the greatest activity in minority education since the early 1980's in Australia has been in language education . . .'

Many of the groups within ethnic communities (and other groups) which had been part of the equality focus of the previous period, and which derived their policy positions from class-based analyses of the purposes of the migration program, opposed strongly this incipient multiculturalist ideology.

The trend to a more culturalist conception of the place of immigrants in Australian society, and of the problem and potential of immigrant children in Australian schools was, however, inexorable. By the end of this period, this perspective had largely – if not completely – supplanted the previous one. To some extent, this was a conscious and deliberate process. Part of the purpose was to depoliticise the 'ethnicity discourse' – to separate it from the ready association which was made with organised labour on the basis of unquestioned assumptions about disadvantage, and with the forces for change in education on the same assumptions. This separation from the socio-political advocacy of rights was ultimately effective – it was enshrined in the key text of this period: the Galbally report. This document is the exemplar of the culturalist explanation of the phenomenon of ethnicity in Australia.

The major characteristic of this period was the way in which culture became a surrogate concept for socio-economic or class issues in the prevailing discourse. The key achievements of the period in terms of programs were the establishment of the 'self-help' ethos through support for ethnic schools, grants-in-aid for welfare to community groups, and the initiation of the Multicultural Education Program designed for 'all students in all schools'.

A significant feature of the present phase of a more economically focussed 'hard-nosed' advocacy of multiculturalism is the reduction in emphasis on demands and moral imperatives in the advocacy. The equality-rights phase justified public intervention in a remedial, problem-solving welfarist mode, similar in some ways to the language-as-problem orientation referred to above (Ruiz 1988). The 'culturalist' phase reflects the language-as-right orientation, though of course cultural maintenance was also advocated. The present phase is more functional and instrumentalist – advocates put their case in terms of the benefits available to society at large – a sort of incipient dealing in which the resources 'locked up' in the community could be released to assist the nation in the urgent task of building itself a new economy, one which is internationalist and outward-looking.

At the level of policy it is clear that a major development has taken place. For this to be reflected in viable educational practice for minorities, further detailed conceptual work – and subsequently curriculum development – will need to take place. Already this is in evidence. The three handicaps which I identified earlier are each having to be addressed critically and rigorously as a necessary precondition for enabling the new rhetoric of cultural and linguistic learning in the service of national goals to be achieved in reality. The first task is to show the actual and concrete interdependence between the maintenance of minority languages and cultures and, either, their direct applicability to trade, commerce and tourism, or the ways in which this maintenance enhances the acquisition of the socio-cultural and linguistic competencies which are required (see Lo Bianco 1988a). In Victoria, for example, the Minister of Education recently launched a Languages Action Plan stating:

> '. . . *we are witnessing a renaissance in the appreciation of both the intellectual and cultural worth of knowing more than one language on the one hand and also the very substantial practical and economic benefits available to individuals, and to the whole society, through such skills . . . For all our students – those retaining a language other than English of family or cultural importance or those adding a second language to their English – languages offer much. To our society and economy language skills overlap strongly with our multilingual population, our place in the Asian-Pacific region and our future as a trading nation in a multilingual world.*'
>
> (Preamble by Education Minister in Lo Bianco 1989b:6)

The educational task involved in these new visions and prospects for multiculturalism requires their refinement and direct utilisation, in addition to the valuing and retaining of the 'skills' of language and culture. This either as an enriched base from which students could acquire the specific cultural and language skills which are in demand, but which are not widely available, among the population (e.g. Japanese), or their direct use if they coincide with practical economic needs (e.g. Chinese, Indonesian, Italian, Spanish and German). The educational task is, however, very much more complex than its simple assertion. At least the following is involved, expressed in a highly generalised way.

## Concepts

The critical concepts which I would propose as relevant to employ in the development of curriculum with an internationalist orientation, and which builds on the existing pluralism, are the following: *Repertoire* (cultural, linguistic and identity); *Inclusiveness* (of knowledge, bases/sources; of subject content sources; of cultural perspectives) *Thresholds* and *Generativeness*.

### Repertoire

*Repertoire* refers to a range of skills and knowledge over which students have mastery. A pluralist-internationalist curriculum would aim to expand the repertoire which the regular curriculum of schools imparts; usually attempting to inculcate loyalty to the nation by building on local and regional identities. An internationalist approach attempts to expand this process, leading to the creation of an identification with wider identities, and ultimately with the globe. The problem which this poses is that national identity, as with many ethnic identities, is constructed on the basis of comparisons which are made between ethnic groups and nations. Such a process, logically, cannot occur with global identity. It must, therefore, be built from a comparison of what its absence would involve, i.e. the complete absence of international awareness and cooperation, inevitably providing no constraints on rivalry and intense competition for economic power, territory and prestige, with all the negative consequences such rivalry brings about.

The repertoire for such a curriculum involves both linguistic and cultural elements. The linguistic requirement for ensuring an internationalist focus in curriculum is clear. Students must be able to be linguistically competent for the communication demands of the modern world; or the region of the world with which their society identifies, in Australia's case, Europe and, increasingly, Asia.

This means the learning and use of at least one additional language. A form of linguistic repertoire already exists for all speakers of language, and with the addition of the internationalist perspective, this may be represented as follows:

| **L1** | + **L2** | + **Lw** | + **(Optional Ln)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| D1 St D | D2 St D | | |
| R1 R2 | Rst | | |

L1 and L2 refer to the first and second language of a speaker; L1 being the mother tongue.

Lw refers to a world language which may be one of the official languages of the United Nations system; or in Australia's specific case could be one of the major Asian languages: Chinese, Indonesian Malay, Japanese or Korean.

Ln means any other languages including 'dead' languages whose learning may be justified for cultural, intellectual or other reasons.

D1 and StD refer to the dialect varieties of students where these are different. It is widely accepted that learners should be helped to attain control over standard forms of their language without stigmatising or denigrating their original dialect variety – this means an expansion of their dialect repertoire with clear awareness about which is appropriate for what use, to whom and when.

R1, R2, Rst refers to the 'registers' one, two and standard registers appropriate for formal use. A register is a stylistic description of language at a smaller level than dialect. Schools have always played the role of expanding and widening the linguistic registers controlled by students.

> 'In Australian education a good start has been made in policy and also in practice in responding positively to societal pluralism.'

It is clear from this very brief description that linguistically, a student is assisted by schooling to expand his or her linguistic repertoire at all levels. Indeed, this happens throughout society in many cultures by the induction of young people into different activities as they grow older. Schooling does this in a more formal way although it is often not done consciously or explicitly. For non-English speaking background children the process is both more complex and, usually, more difficult. Utilising pluralism as a beginning for constructing an internationalist focus in curricula involves making the linguistic repertoire expansion explicit and universal.

The following idealised, diagramatically presented examples may serve to clarify the point. For Australian born students of Italian background, say, from the Veneto region these stages would be as shown in Figure 1. If this idealised student attains fluency in Italian and English, his her linguistic repertoire would look as depicted in Figure 2.

This notion of 'repertoire' attempts to incorporate the socio-cultural range in the individual's life. This socio-cultural range of experience is *marked* by language variations.

**Figure 1**

| **HOME LEARNING** | | **and** | **SCHOOL LEARNING** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| L1 | L2 | L2 *as* L1 | Lr *as* L1 | L1 *as* L2 |
| R1 + D1<br>Veneto at home | R1 + D1<br>Informal learning of child English | R1 + D1<br>Australian English | Rst + Dst<br>Standard Australian English of formalised registers | Rst + Dst<br>Learning of Italian as a standard language |

**ITALIAN**
L1 learned as L2 at
school but maintained *as* D1 at home

| | |
|---|---|
| *Veneto* -<br>the registers of Veneto used in family situations | *Standard Italian* the formalised registers of the standard language used in formal situations |

PLUS

**ENGLISH**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Australian English* -<br>informal varieties | *Standard Australian English* formal varieties |

**Figure 2**

The internationalist perspective extends the repertoire further. It could do this by requiring the learning of an Asian language, Esperanto or an additional major world language. It ought to aim, however, to *extend* an existing repertoire rather than replace components of it with a dominant and imposed language. By doing this it will be empowering students with a linguistic 'range' appropriate to the full gamut of possible socio-cultural contexts.

To continue with the above example this could be represented as in Figure 3.

Reconstruing multicultural education as preparing for Australia's world and regional participation ought to involve the expansion of the cultural and identity repertoire of students in a similar way to the expansion of their linguistic range described above. Although this may be largely the task of the social education component of the curriculum, to be really effective it will need to permeate the whole curriculum, indeed, the whole school. The school's teacher and student policies, administrative practices, as well as its curriculum and pedagogy, must reflect its ideals of being pluralistic, multicultural and internationalist for students and the broader community to perceive not only that it is desirable – but that it is possible to aspire realistically to these ideals.

Cultural and identity repertoire are, however, educationally more difficult to conceptualise than linguistic repertoire and, possibly, more difficult to bring about. Cultural and identity repertoire are more abstract, amorphous concepts and therefore harder to achieve in practice. They follow the same path however – the educational process is similar. It begins by strengthening the foundation which students gain in their family contexts and recognising that, although these are appropriate and necessary for some contexts, they are inadequate for others. The diagrammatic representation in Figure 4 may express this idea.

The first refers to the cultural and social identification of individuals to their immediate family or geographic group or even to a larger group or construct but one which is smaller than the nation. The second to the nation-state, the third to any voluntarily adopted additional cultural or social-identity learning which an individual may do (e.g. an Anglo-Australian becoming an enthusiast for Chinese culture or converting to Islam or 'adopting' the lifestyle, culture and world view of the Balinese). Positive though including such attachments in the lives of individuals may be, it is not internationalism. This latter (Cw + Iw) refers to the cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the positive identification with the globe. It does not come about through comparaing the 'cultural offerings' of nations, ranking them, and on the basis of an individual's preferences or predilections, adding one or two to one's own. It comes about, rather, through realising the practical interdependence (financial, economic, strategic, cultural etc.) of nations in the modern world, the impossibility and futility of ranking cultures in a rigid way and the serious need for internationalist identities to be inculcated in future leaders. It comes about through realising the dire political consequences of having no 'global consciousness'

**Figure 3**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Veneto*<br>local-contexts | + *Australian English*<br>+ national contexts | + *Standard Italian*<br>+ extended contexts | + *Ln* Spanish/Japanese<br>+ World/regional contexts |

**Figure 4**

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| local<br>contexts | C1<br>I | national +<br>contexts | C2<br>I2 | adopted<br>or extra +<br>contexts | C3<br>I3 | required<br>extra +<br>contexts | Cw<br>Iw |

and the positive benefits of promoting such a consciousness. In Australia's case it would tap the immediately evident need for what has come to be called Asia-literacy or Asia-awareness on the part of business people, politicians and, even, ordinary citizens, by building on a general cultural-awareness and positive appreciation of diversity in Australia. Both would need to be steps in the broader inculcation of a more internationalist consciousness.

## Inclusiveness

*Inclusiveness* is easier to describe than repertoire. By this concept is meant that, as far as it is practically possible, the internationalist curriculum would derive its sources of knowledge from a wide range of possibilities; it would include cultural perspectives, perceptions and interpretations of phenomena from a wide range of sources; it would contain subject matter content valued by a wide range of cultures. It would not be so blind as to say that the only valuable knowledge is that which derives from explicitly scientific processes. It would attempt to tap the stocks of knowledge valued, not only by a range of cultures, but by the different processes whereby knowledge has been created. It would attempt to contain different interpretations of phenomena, ideas, and 'reality', as well as to say things about how these differences have emerged – and what is negative positive about them. It would shirk extreme cultural relativism but should not be absolutist.

> 'This choice could well determine if the new 'hard-nosed' multiculturalism will help revitalise multicultural education or be its swan song.'

It ought not be the responsibility solely of the social education component of curricula that this inclusiveness comes about, nor ought it be 'reduced' or contained in a new or different subject or unit such as anthropology, or theory of knowledge. The inclusivity of the curriculum must characterise both the planned and unplanned learning experiences, i.e. the explicit and the 'hidden' curriculum as well as the teacher employment policies, the administrative arrangements, the social activities, the organisational structures and so on.

Again, to prevent this becoming overly theoretical or generalised the educational principles on which it is based are that the abstract and distant concepts are derived and built from the concrete experiences of the students. They are the point of departure. Moving out to encompass distant ideas must always mean being secure in the point of departure. The pluralism of Australia's classrooms would be among the richest possible of starting points.

## Thresholds

The third concept is the idea of thresholds. By this is meant the general idea that to attain a target point which the school, the student, or the community may desire in *new* knowledge, skills and attitudes, it is often necessary to attain thresholds of knowledge, skills and attitudes. This idea is based on the belief that there is an interdependence between existing knowledge and desired knowledge. The successful learning of a second language is widely held to be, and has been shown to be, greatly enhanced when it is taught on the sound basis of knowledge of the first language. The argument here is that this is likely to be also true of cultural identification and of attitudes: generalised socio-cultural awareness emerging from biculturalism which is challenged to go further. For these reasons it is vital to reinforce the identity of students if we are to then ask them to go beyond it.

## Generativeness

By this term I mean the idea of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes which can *themselves generate* further skills in, and knowledge of, culture and language. The curriculum must be able to impart knowledge about how to acquire new knowledge so that the students can themselves extrapolate, generalise and hypothesise about the knowledge which is potentially available to them, but which has not yet been imparted to them. In this way, a limited amount of knowledge and skills can generate the acquisition of further knowledge and skills. This will mean working with students to uncover the principles which underlie facts or data, to ask the 'why' questions in response to the 'whats'. The linguistic and cultural diversity of the population is again the crucial starting point. The omnibus notions of culture which have been a feature of multicultural policies, along with the static material-culture definitions fail precisely in that they are not able to generate broader socio-cultural awareness. The purpose of such programs ought not just be to reinforce or bolster self esteem for minority children – nor simply to inculcate positive attitudes in them and in majority children; but rather to also impart cultural knowledge which is analytical and critical.

## Addressing the obstacles

If it were possible for the newly emergent claims about Australia's pluralism to genuinely revitalise multicultural education then a more systematic educational and curriculum analysis is needed. This would need to devise a generative notion of culture in the ways described above, and link this to the skills, knowledge and awareness children bring to school. In so doing the 'identity-self-esteem' goal which was important in the culturalist conception of multicultural education would therefore be accommodated. Such a conceptualisation would inevitably respond to the more broadly socially enriching and tolerance-promoting objectives of the culturalist perspective as well. The equity rationale would also be addressed since minority children's backgrounds assume a new and more positively valued role. Such an approach would also assist in overcoming at least some of the aspects of the public-private divide, since the outcomes being advocated are clearly universal and would be properly included in the curriculum of all schools.

This conflict would be relegated to history's filing cabinet since the prevailing assumption in internationalist curricula, which builds on multi-culturalism, is that the mainstream is thoroughly involved in this approach, and any private efforts organised to the same end merely reinforce the general activity. The cultures and languages of minority groups, if seen as resources to be conserved, valued and built-on become cognitive and attitudinal advantages, allowing children the heightened possibility of generalising and expanding further to meet the self-perceived needs of the nation for a culturally and linguistically more adaptable, skilled and sophisticated population. Rather than merely having specific cultural backgrounds reinforced, the very concept of culture, including its universality and its adaptive and functional character, would be stressed as well. This would have the express goal of producing students who are aware not only of the surface differences in culture, but also of the deeper role which culture plays in group life. More competent and adaptable individuals would be the aim of this more critical knowledge.

Smolicz has expressed similar ideas in the following way:

> '*Australia cannot adopt an isolationist stance in relation to its external or internal cultural environment. Our geographical location in Asia and the Pacific region carries with it cultural, as well as trade implications. Otherwise we remain an honoured guest, never a member of this particular grouping of nations... The future of our economic links with Europe is clearly related to Australia being regarded not as a stranger, but as a country with close ancestral and cultural links, and therefore deserving the status of a 'family member'. This involves recognition that the strands of Australian culture still reach out to the countries of our origin and that we have to build upon our manifold heritage by moulding it into a uniquely Australian tradition. The crystallisation of such a tradition is most likely to succeed in a resilient society – a society which releases the fullest possible creative potential of all Australians by trusting its citizens to be Australians not only in political, but also in cultural terms.*' (Smolicz 1988:10)

Multiculturalism conceived of in these ways becomes a domestic 'modelling' of internationalism. But multiculturalism is yet to succeed in developing a set of goals, a discourse and related programs which could place it at the mainstream of education. Had it been able to anticipate and incorporate the national need for responding to cultural studies/languages which are important for economic reasons (especially Asian studies) by regarding these as interdependent with the response to pluralism among the population; and to Australian studies as the need for a distinctively 'national' ethos to pervade our education, and Aboriginal studies as a unique and ancient interpretation of our continent, important not only for reasons of social justice but for self-knowledge too, it could have become the organising conceptual framework for cultural and linguistic learning generally. There is still this potential. Indeed, by far the greatest activity in minority education since the early 1980s in Australia has been in language education: community language teaching, bilingual teaching, Aboriginal languages, ESL and related curriculum developments. The public agitation for concerted government action on these matters resulted in a two year investigation of the issue by the Senate, the adoption of a National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco 1987) and complementary state policies in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and New South Wales. Queensland is in the process of producing policies at present, as is the Australian Capital Territory. Tasmania and the Northern Territory have less comprehensive language statements, but statements which are supportive. Language policy has taken its own direction although it too obligatorily genuflects before both pluralism and the exigencies of trade and geo-political imperatives.

Multicultural advocacy is now putting forward school language learning as an 'apprenticeship' in language learning in the way Hawkins (1981) argues; i.e. a keeping alive of the mental machinery for language learning so that, as a bilingual, the learner can more efficiently and successfully acquire languages (i.e. languages required by the society at a later time but unpredictable earlier) because as a bilingual the student has an enriched capacity to learn, having already learned how to master a language. A similar interdependence could be mounted for cultural learning. In these ways status is given to bilingualism biculturalism, but the curriculum requires students to go further and generalise, extrapolate and keep learning.

## Conclusion

To be formulated and accepted in this way, language and cultural programs for minorities face at least one major difficulty and at least two risks. The difficulty is that the new way of conceiving of the issues may be rather too abstract, indirect and long term to appeal to governments and policy makers who are sometimes apt to settle for expedient political responses to the social and educational demands which confront them. It may also be too idealised. The two risks are that the cultural minority groups could repudiate the ideas arguing that they favour more the interests of the state and less the interests of the society's constituent groups. The other risk is that policy makers could appropriate the more hard-nosed rationales for pluralistic education and exploit the support offered by minorities for them to give excessive emphasis to the economic and nationally determined outcomes, and make only token gestures towards the role and needs of children of minority backgrounds.

The alternative, unfortunately, is to believe that there is little interdependence and that the pluralism of the society is as much a problem as it is a resource. Multiculturalism would then atrophy, and increasingly become a 'sop to the ethnics' – cultural pluralism becoming a residualised, occasional activity pursued in education only for atavistic purposes – or become fully relegated to the private domain; because the economic and practical imperatives for cultural and language learning are strong and immediate.

In Australian education a good start has been made in policy and also in practice (albeit to a more limited degree) in responding positively to societal pluralism. A crucial crossroads is being faced – one pointing wholly private the other public – unless the interaction between the domestic pluralism and the externally oriented cultural and linguistic demands is accepted and the interdependence described, much good work will be lost. The language used to talk about the issue will in itself signal the prospects and influence the direction.

This choice could well determine if the new 'hard-nosed' multiculturalism will help revitalise multicultural education or be its swan song.

## Appendix

By origin, the Australian population comprises the following elements:

- Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, comprising approximately 1% of the total population;
- People from United Kingdom and Ireland backgrounds of three or more generations and comprising approximately 60% of the total population;
- Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds of three or more generations ago comprising approximately 5% of the population;
- First and second generation English speaking background Australians comprising approximately 14% of the total population;
- Second generation Australians of non-English speaking background comprising approximately 8% of the total population; and
- First generation Australians of non-English speaking background comprising approximately 12% of the total population. (CAAIP, 1987:11).

Despite being the sixth largest of nations, Australia has a population of only 16 million people which is, however, highly urbanised, being concentrated in a string of cities hugging the fertile south-eastern coastal strip from Brisbane to Adelaide.

Sydney and Melbourne alone, with a few of their satellites, account for not far off half the total population. With a population growth rate of 1.86% in 1986, an historically low level which is declining still further, Australia is growing, but only slowly compared with developing nations, especially its nearest neighbours such as Indonesia; but is growing quickly compared with other developed nations such as the Federal Republic of Germany where the population is declining in absolute numbers. Fertility estimates are at about 1.87 births per woman, more than 10% below long-term replacement. Relative to population size, the immigration intake (a projected 140,000 new arrivals for 1989) is the largest of any country in the world. Relative to population, Australia has one of the largest foreign-born components. In 1986 one in every five Australians was born overseas; as far as the labour force is concerned, Australia has the highest proportion of overseas born workers of any country other than Israel. In absolute terms the overseas-born population of 3.4 million is the fifth largest of all countries behind the USA (14.1 million), France (5.5 million), the Federal Republic of Germany (4.4 million), and Canada (3.9 million) (CAAIP passim).

Translating the population origins into languages first spoken, it emerges that about 80% of the population is native English speaking. The remaining percentage is divided among a large number of groups, the largest being Italian, followed in order by Greek, the languages of Yugoslavia, German, Dutch, Arabic, Chinese languages, Polish, Maltese, Spanish, French and Vietnamese. None of the 150 Aboriginal languages still spoken commands more than 3 000 speakers; the majority are not spoken by children (DILGEA, 1987).

As Fesl commented:

> '*when the British first arrived in Australia it is calculated that there were approximately 260 languages being spoken. Estimates put dialectal variation at between 500 and 600. The results of a survey in 1979 found that only 115 of these languages then remained. The majority had less than 500 speakers and many languages stood on the verge of extinction. The rapidity and finality of the deaths of 145 languages in 186 years will be hard to match elsewhere in the world*' *(1987: 13)*.

It is usual to describe Australian pluralism in language terms – firstly because of the nature of the immigration program which has in the past recruited exclusively from Christian white Europe where a major intergroup distinguishing feature has been language, and secondly because of the centrality of language in Aboriginal culture and spiritual life. This has meant that language policies have been the dominant feature of the multicultural policies which have recently been adopted since the abandonment of assimilationist policies in the early to mid-1970s.

A significant indicator of the trends in cultural behaviour are the trends in language use. They are, in addition to the more extreme case of Aboriginal languages noted above, very clear trends. The many languages used daily in Australia by non-English speaking groups can be grouped as follows:

- 15% (1.7 million people) of Australia's population aged 15 and over have a language other than English as their first language.
- Of the 1.7 million people of non-English speaking background, 85% were born outside Australia. Major groups of non-English speakers and their numbers are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Italian | 440 776 |
| Greek | 227167 |
| German | 165 633 |
| Dutch | 110 540 |
| Polish | 86 016 |
| Chinese | 85 000 |
| Arabic | 77565 |
| Croatian | 65 882 |
| Maltese | 60 000 |
| Spanish | 56 500 |
| Vietnamese | 27252 |
| Serbian | 27000 |

- Of these 1.7 million people, 90% speak their first language socially; 75% speak it at home; 50% speak it elsewhere; 35% speak it at work. People from Southern Europe or Middle-Eastern countries or Vietnam generally use their first language much more (80%-90%) than people from Northern Europe (20%-30%) or those of Chinese origin (30%).
- Of all immigrants from non-English speaking background, some 95% are able to speak English and 88% state they have some acquired English through English classes; one-third through informal contacts (socially or at work); one-third through schooling.
- Of the 1.7 million people aged 15 and over with a non-English language first spoken:
  - — 2.4% have not acquired any English and have acquired no other language;
  - — 22.5% acquired one non-English language;
  - — 7.5% acquired two non-English languages;
  - — 3.4% acquired three or more non-English languages.
- For people with English as a language first spoken, the most popularly acquired non-English languages were French, German and Italian (in this order); although over the last few years there has been a surge in interest in studying Asian languages, principally Japanese. ►

- Of persons aged 15 years and over, 9 428 800 spoke English only as their first language.
- Of the total number of people with English as the language first spoken:
  - — 10.2% of these people acquired one non-English language;
  - — 2.4% acquired two non-English speaking languages;
  - — 0.6% acquired three or more languages; and
  - — 86.6% acquired no other languages.

(Based on the Language Survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, May 1983, quoted in Lo Bianco, 1987:24-25).

In comparing the trends between the 1976 census which included a question about 'languages used regularly' and the 1986 census which sought information about 'languages used in the home', Clyne has noted that there has been significant increase in the number of speakers of Chinese, Arabic and Macedonian, Vietnamese, Filipino languages, Spanish, Maltese, Portugese and Polish. The shift away from the use of minority languages has, however, accelerated from some groups, especially the longer established European communities.

During 1987 the Commonwealth government adopted a National Policy on Languages which has, as a major goal, the encouragement of widespread bilingualism including the learning of languages of economic and strategic significance, especially Asian languages, and the maintenance of the languages of the population.

During 1988 the Commonwealth government also strongly endorsed its multiculturalist philosophy. Although in 1947 Australia embarked on its immigration program partly to deny its proximity to Asia, at the official level in the late 1980s both immigration and economic directions are linking the nation to Asia in strong ways.

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# Asian Studies in Australia and Some Overseas Comparisons

By ***Elaine McKay***

How many Australians have really come to terms with the significance of our geographic proximity to Asia, to our economic dependence on trade with Asia or to the cultural diversity and richness of the thought worlds of Asia? Only in terms of military strategy has Asia impinged on our collective consciousness. Added to this area of military threats, there is the legacy of the Cold War, even when the perceived enemy then was not in fact in Asia despite propaganda to the contrary, but was the USSR.

We have been touched by three waves of concern for teaching Asian studies and Asian languages since the end of the second World War. The first was in the 1950s when Indonesian language teaching was established at Melbourne and Sydney universities and in what was then the Canberra University College (later part of the ANU when the Asian Studies Faculty was established). Ultimately Indonesian language teaching found its way into schools.

In 1970 Professor Auchmuty in a report, *The Teaching of Asian Languages and Cultures*, recommended that Asian languages be treated with 'parity of esteem' with European languages. The Commonwealth created the Asian Studies Coordinating Committee and gave it a budget of $1m over five years. A major Japanese language course for schools was developed and other resources for teaching about Asian cultures were published. A scheme of travel grants for teachers to go to Asia was initiated. But when the budget expired, new resources were given to other priority areas in education, in particular, to multicultural education. Many Asian studies teachers in schools and colleges were then subsumed under this rubric; many others slipped out of the systems.

> 'Not only does Australia conduct more than half its trade with Asian countries, we are losing a proportion of that trade to more enterprising and skilful traders from other Western countries.'

It is no coincidence that this third wave of Asian studies should have arisen in the 1980s. Asia is now the fastest growing economic region in the world. Not only does Australia conduct more than half its trade with Asian countries, we are losing a proportion of that trade to more enterprising and skilful traders from other Western countries both from North America and the European Economic Community. The rationale for the Asian Studies Council's *National Strategy* is based on this economic imperative though there are signs that earlier purely instrumentalist motives, attractive to the present government, are being modified by the concerns of educationalists who, after all, must deliver the policy in the classrooms.

Despite these three waves of concern for Asian studies, we are still agreed that our collective ignorance about the region is appalling. Yet on this occasion, I want to make some international comparisons to give us some perspective on the state of Asian studies in Australia. These comparisons throw light on some of our achievements and we may find more energy in well-placed pride than on a constant diet of gloom and doom, energy on which to build a more rounded education program.

If Australia has been caught unprepared for the rapid developments in the Asian region, so too have other Western countries. During his recent study leave taken at the OECD Development Centre in Paris, Associate Professor Derek Healey from the Department of Economics at the University of Adelaide was studying some of the changes in the world economy as a result of Japan's emergence as the world's major creditor and the United States' relegation to becoming the world's major debtor. He writes: 'That such a transformation of world economic (and hence, ultimately, political) roles should have occurred within the last three years is a remarkable fact of our era, still not fully grasped by academics or the world at large. Certainly in Europe I found scant awareness of the strength of the Pacific Basin countries and of the economic and political power shifts involved, away from Europe and North America. What *did* exist in Europe was a vague fear of the 'Far East' (yes, the Eurocentric term is *still* used, even in the official documentation of the OECD) and a determination to prevent imports from economically more efficient Japan and the Asian NIEs (the newly industrialised economies of the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore – soon to be joined by Thailand and Malaysia).' (Healey, 1989, 7)

The conclusion Healey draws for European societies' general response to Asia is naturally reflected in their education systems. Almost no schools in the United Kingdom, continental Europe and the United States teach any Asian languages. One hundred and six schools in Victoria alone teach an Asian language.

This gives us a perspective on the study of Asia and its languages in Australia.

Although in 1987 only 2.2% of Australian children studied an Asian language at year 12, this was proportionately and absolutely more than in any other Western country. Although our teachers rightly complain that their books are out-of-date and their teaching resources are inadequate. Australia has in its teaching service more accumulated skills and wisdom on the teaching of Asian societies and languages than any other Western teaching service. No other school system in the world has an exchange scheme, officially recognised and financially supported, with an Asian country such as exists between the Northern Territory and Indonesia whereby not only teachers but students spend extended periods of time in each others' schools. Furthermore, the scheme has been in existence for seventeen years. Education authorities in Canada believe the Japanese course produced in Australia by Professor Alfonso is the best that exists. It was written in the 1970s.

This store of knowledge and practice takes years to accumulate. It has been accumulated by a far sighted and dedicated few working for the most part in an unsympathetic, even hostile environment, often in isolation. Their work has received little or no recognition between waves of brief official enthusiasm.

'Australia has in its teaching service more accumulated skills and wisdom on the teaching of Asian societies and languages than any other Western teaching service.'

Today, as the wave of rhetoric again rises in favour of Asian studies, we have an invaluable base of people, knowledge and resources on which to build. In Asian studies terms, they represent 'national treasures'. That they are so few should not be a matter for the condemnation too often targeted at them but a matter for amazement and congratulation. In fact, let us set aside condemnation altogether and let us reflect on the principles which should be drawn from this experience.

The first principle which must be learned is that inconsistent and unsustained government policies are quite simply a waste of money. A commitment to the study of Asia and its languages must be a community and a national commitment: it must be bipartisan at both state and Commonwealth levels. It must be a commitment which bites deep into the educational bureaucracies: it must not be tied to appointments which are political first and Asian second (if at all). If this is not the case, a change of government means a change of personnel or a blocking of a section's work, and accumulated wisdom is lost or frustrated again. There are plenty of experienced teachers and administrators who saw the wave of enthusiasm for Asian studies in the 1970s and who are reserving judgement on this present wave. Rhetoric and brief, inadequate dedication of resources are an ineffective antidote for cynicism.

The second principle lies in the valuing of teachers and in the recognition that nothing will change in the classroom without a combination of factors to support teachers' work. In the first place, Asian languages and studies must be given adequate time on the timetable. One or two periods a week or an option against a particularly popular subject will not do. The recent Inquiry into Asia in Australian Higher Education refers to Australia as a society of 'failed language learners'. If we look closely at the timetabling of languages in Grades 7 and 8 in many of our schools, we find only one or two periods a week devoted to any one language, though students may be studying two languages. In some schools, a different language is offered in each term or semester in Grade 7 based on a rationale of offering a 'taste' of more than one so that students will later make a more 'informed' choice. If language is indeed what is taught in these units, then it is a waste of time. Rather, as suggested by Charlesworth (1988) and Neustupny (1988), students would be more productively engaged if they were first to dip into the culture of the group and to postpone the study of the language until they are 'sufficiently motivated to tackle with enthusiasm the task of learning to speak and understand the language and read and write the literature, as the 'code system' for probing more deeply into that culture.' (Committee on Foreign Languages quoted by Charlesworth)

This ordering of culture and language studies should not be read as either or. Effective studies of other cultures should be comprehensive in their embrace and involve mastering the language, a thorough understanding of the dynamics of the society, its politics and economy and first-hand experience in the country or culture of the study. All this however is the ultimate goal; along the road there are many staging posts. Only a few students will make good progress towards mastery of the language, although the number may be many more than we in Australia have come to expect. We have a picture of ourselves as monolingual, lacking incentive and somehow even lacking in talent for foreign language learning. We have a picture of foreign language learning as difficult and of Asian languages learning as extremely difficult. Thus we find ourselves totally unprepared for the recent enormous demand for Japanese language learning both in schools and in tertiary institutions.

This brings us to the third principle which we can deduce from recent experience. We must clarify

Increased business links between Asia and Australia indicate a growing need for Asian languages education in Australia. (*Photo courtesy of Australian Information Service*)

what can reasonably be expected from language studies and from culture studies. The fine point at issue is not levels of achievement which have been considerably advanced by the Australian Language Level Program (ALL) Guidelines, but what we expect from the study of a language and what we expect from the study of a culture which does not involve language learning.

Only a few students will master Asian languages. However, *all* students can achieve *some* insights into one or more Asian cultures, their history, values, arts, economic and political systems through studies in humanities and the social sciences. Adding an Asian dimension to these studies in schools is by no means beyond us. Indeed, it may be easier to achieve than answering the demand for Asian language teaching. The Asian Studies Council and the Curriculum Development Centre are addressing this question but we are yet to see the outcomes because change that bites deep and permanently into our education systems cannot be achieved quickly.

Within a core subject, such as Social Studies, the study of Asia should not be an option. But there are good reasons why the study of Asia is often avoided. For example, when ancient riverine civilizations are the topic of study, the Nile is taught and not the Indus or the Yangtse. To support teachers' work lively, rich, and colourful resources are essential. School texts and school libraries are full of engaging information on Egypt, just as the teaching of French in schools is richly resourced – the accumulations of a century of dedicated teaching. Why should not teachers get academic credit for producing materials in post-graduate programs for use and trial in the classroom? The University of York offers teachers a Diploma in Applied Educational Studies for this kind of work. We could extend the program begun by the University of New South Wales whereby master teachers are freed from classroom work for a year and are attached to academic institutions to prepare resources for the classroom. The Asian Studies Council, the institution and the education authority could all share the cost of the program.

The fourth principle also relates to teachers. We know that teachers are most likely to teach *what* they have been taught and to teach in the *way* they have been taught. If this cycle is to be broken, certain conditions must be met. Teachers need to participate in some kind of in-service program, and this program must be of a prolonged duration. It is desirable that the program have both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The latter may be academic or professional credit. The former may relate to improving the teacher's performance in the classroom or to his/her intellectual satisfaction. Teacher incentive schemes involving teacher exchanges, subsidized summer school programs or in-country travel and study are attractive rewards for teachers. The well-known Bay Area Global Education Program (BAGEP) in California and a new and similar program, the Consortium for Teaching Asia and the Pacific in Schools (CTAPS) in Hawaii have some of these features. They also work on the principle of teachers teaching teachers with academics (after the initial training), playing a secondary support and management role.

It has been found in in-service programs that the teachers' commitment is sustained when the program they are teaching is under-pinned by an articulated (not simply implied) philosophy of teaching. Part of the time devoted to in-service programs is well-spent when either the program's philosophy is explained and teachers are given time to come to terms with it, or when time and discussion are devoted to teachers informing, developing and articulating their own philosophy of teaching. The conviction thus developed will sustain teachers through the vicissitudes of school life and help to ensure that a program does not simply fade away under competing pressures of sports competitions, AIDS campaigns and learning to cope with changing assessment procedures.

In my recent inquiries overseas into intercultural (sometimes Asian) studies programs this feature – an articulated philosophy of teaching – was usually not present. In addition, in most places teachers did not have a very sound academic background in Asian subject matter. Some have had first-hand experience as volunteers abroad or as Peace Corps workers, but unless this experience is supplemented by well-balanced reading, it may be no better than a latter day version of teaching about 'the natives'. Although I am sure there are many teachers in Australia who are required to teach about Asian countries without any academic background, there are many others who have had sustained study of Asian history or geography in particular, in their undergraduate programs. This adds a great deal of strength to programs in Australia. Recruitment policies in the future in all the relevant disciplines and social studies should ensure that some members of the team have an academic background in Asian content.

Let me turn now to content – the fifth principle. There was a time in the seventies when teacher educators were wont to say 'it's not the content that matters, it's the process'. Of course this was a reaction to an earlier time when all that seemed to matter was the content. In the eighties, having decided that children should learn about cultures other than their own, we must be explicit about the fact that the Chinese culture, for example, is more important to Australian children than the Nigerian or the Guatemalan cultures. At the same time, we need to make decisions about what content is of most worth. The answer lies in the content which best informs the understandings we want our children to develop. These will be different for different age groups so that in primary and middle school, family life, inter personal relationships, work and sex roles might be appropriate while economics and industrial or foreign relations would not be appropriate until senior high school.

> 'Today, as the wave of rhetoric again rises in favour of Asian studies, we have an invaluable base of people, knowledge and resources on which to build.'

As in the past in Australia, so too in all Western countries, culture studies dominate the few courses which address Asia. Since very little time is spent on any one culture the level of understanding is superficial in the extreme and the danger of reinforcing stereotypes is profound. Only in British senior history courses and in certain British and European development education units is a depth of understanding likely to be achieved. At senior levels in some places in the United States, economics or 'economics in an international context' has very recently appeared, perhaps to add a hard edge to the pap which too often masquerades as culture studies.

My recent experience overseas had led me to several conclusions about Asian studies in Australia. We are perhaps better placed than any other Western country in the world to teach about Asia, to develop an expertise in that teaching and to produce resources (albeit modified) which could find a market around the world. Considerable interest was expressed overseas in my own project, funded by the Asian Studies Council, to produce computer based resources for teaching about Asia in schools. At the moment however, the United Kingdom and Europe are preoccupied with 1991 and teaching about each other. There are only small pockets of interest in India as a 'development' case study or South Asian and Turkish cultures as migrant or refugee cultures in a multicultural context.

Schools in the United States, which have not been good in the past at looking outwards, now believe they must cover the world. Thirty-eight of the fifty-two states have 'mandated' the internationalization of their curriculum but apart from Asia, they believe that Africa, Latin America and the Middle East must also be seen to receive time. In California for twenty years, and in Hawaii starting in 1988, programs have been established to improve the teaching about Asia. And these changes have stimulated political conservatives to campaign against this policy as unpatriotic!

Canada is Janus-faced, one face looking across the Atlantic to Europe, the other across the Pacific to Asia. British Columbia is half-way through a three-year program for promoting N.E. Asian studies in schools and for the inservicing of its teachers.

> 'We are perhaps better placed than any other Western country in the world to teach about Asia, to develop an expertise in that teaching and to produce resources which could find a market around the world.'

Enthusiasm is high. C$12m over three years has been devoted to the program. There is a rapid increase in the teaching of both Japanese and Chinese languages. In some ways, the enthusiasm in British Columbia has the qualities of naivety evident in Australia in the 1970s. But there are important features which will probably sustain their efforts. The first is the amount of the resources being devoted to their Asia-Pacific program. Although money is not everything, the sums involved suggest a degree of government commitment which is lacking in Australia. The population of British Columbia is less than that of the state of Victoria. Secondly, their policy is being built on the multicultural programs of the 1970s in a way which suggests maturity and a society more secure in its multi-culturalism than is Australia's. It is outward-looking, building on its very sizeable immigrant groups which come from all regions of Asia. It is unambiguous about its vision of its future as lying in the Asian region. Sadly, I do not think that Australia has such a clear commitment to its future in the region. It is certainly not yet reflected in its education systems.

I have concentrated on a comparison of school systems. I have done this because we must get it right in the schools if this present wave in favour of Asian Studies is to succeed in raising our understanding of Asian societies and their languages in an on-going way.

The schools are so important because there is now a demand and an enthusiasm there which must be met. Parents are now insisting that schools teach Asian languages. Sadly, it is more likely (though not exclusively) to be in private rather than in government schools. One I know of is in the process of establishing a study centre in Malaysia to give its students first hand experience and is encouraging its teachers to take postgraduate studies to prepare them for their work in the region.

The second reason why schools are so important is that if we want an 'Asia conscious' society we must depend on the schools (and the media) to produce it, and thirdly, if we want to produce Asian *expertise* from our Universities we must have students at tertiary level who have a head-start in Asian languages and familiarity with the background of the region. Only then can we hope that, after 3-4 years of tertiary study, we will have significant numbers of people who are truly proficient in an Asian language, on the way to being truly 'Asia literate'.

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# Languages for the Professions: Linguistic and Cultural Presuppositions

By **Anne McLaren** and **Helen Tebble**

Fast disappearing are the days when a masters graduate with a degree in foreign language could not purchase an icecream or make a telephone call in the language studied. This is not to say that standards of masters graduates were low but rather that the students' preoccupation with literary criticism left them no time to develop elementary social and communicative skills in the chosen language.

As language courses in higher education switch from a focus on the study of a civilization through mainly literary texts to a focus on general communicative skills, including those preparing students for careers in specific professions, what do we gain and what do we lose? The famous scholar of the Middle East, Edward Said, wrote in *Orientalism* that one of the hallmarks of recent American study of the Orient was its stress on facts and 'singular avoidance of literature' (1978, p. 291). The effect of this omission according to Said is 'to keep the region and its people conceptually emasculated, reduced to "attitudes", "trends", "statistics", in short, dehumanized'.

A grave charge indeed. Does this mean that if a student of languages with difficult scripts such as Chinese and Japanese learns basic communicative skills but never reaches the stage, which may take at least five years, where he or she can read literature independently, that these studies will be ipso facto 'conceptually emasculated' or 'dehumanized'? Short courses in shall we say, 'Korean for Flight Attendants' or 'Mandarin Chinese for Acupuncture' are undeniably narrow and utilitarian in focus. Is this equally true for degree language programs in Business Chinese or Business Arabic? Do such courses allow for general cognitive development or provide a broad intellectual environment that one expects of a university – level course? Is there a danger that these courses will become mere training in particular expressions of a language as opposed to an educational opportunity for significant intellectual growth?

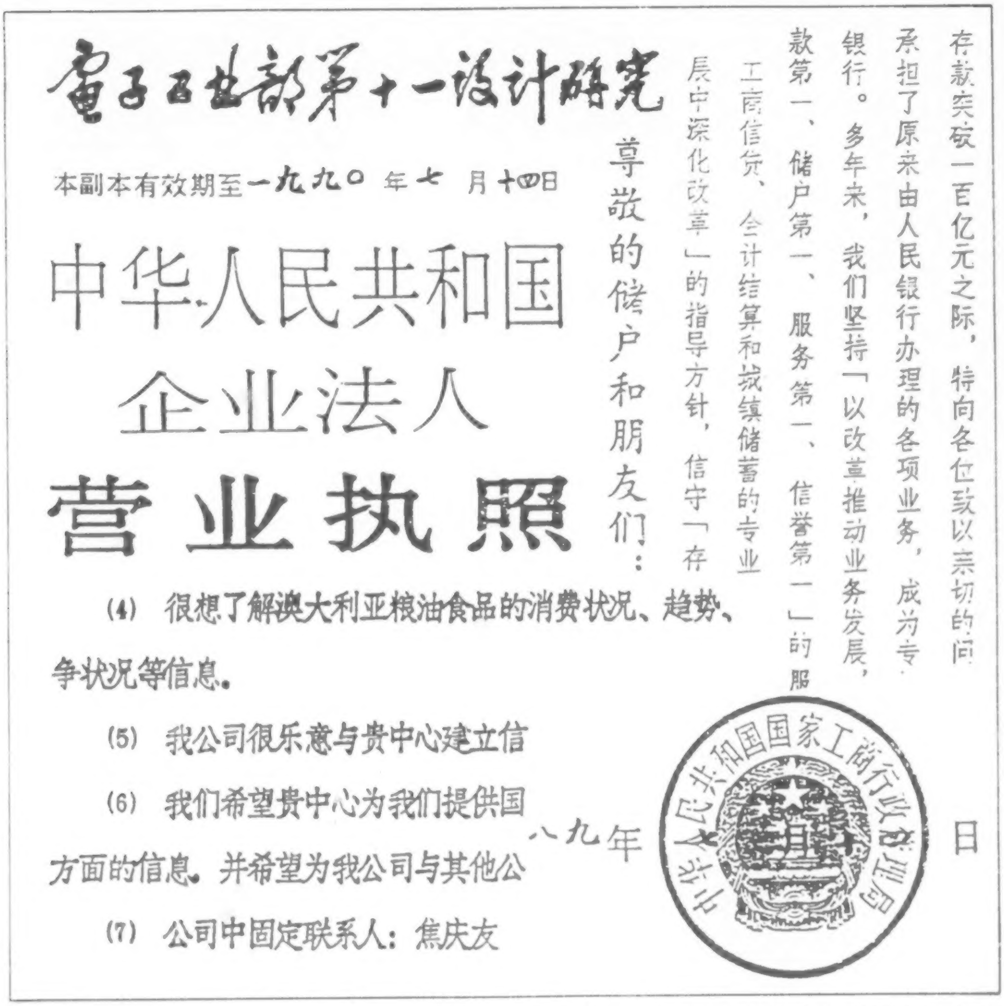
The staff at the Department of Language and Culture Study at Victoria College have been aware of these problems for a number of years. The Department offers programs in twelve languages, including majors for undergraduates and NAATI – accredited courses in interpreting and translating. Four-year courses for double degree students in Business and Arts with language programs in Arabic, Chinese and Indonesian are also available. A number of supporting cultural studies are offered students of a language such as three-year programs in Australia-Asia Studies, Australia-Mediterranean Studies and units in the theory and practice of interpreting and translating. The research carried out by the academic staff complements the programs offered. As well as a range of cultural and literary studies, staff members are also engaged in broader language projects, many of which have attracted special funding, such as:

- the discourse analysis of the language use of professional groups such as systems analysts and the theory of interpreting (Helen Tebble)
- evaluation performance in interpreting and translation (Adolfo Gentile)
- language policy in Australia, in particular, the politics of multicultural language learning in Australia (Dr Uldis Ozolins)
- Chinese language used in business communication (see below)

Work commenced on the Chinese Business Communication Project in 1989. It involves the collection of authentic business or official material from the Peoples' Republic of China such as correspondence and documents, the taxonomy and analysis of such material in order to form preliminary models of linguistic usage in particular situations, and the compiling of modules of such realia for teaching purposes. The Victorian Education Foundation has awarded Victoria College $215 000 over a three-year period to a multi-disciplinary team comprising Dr Lin Li, Dr Anne McLaren, Mr Andrew Endrey, Dr Gloria Davis, Ms Helen Tebble, Mr Andrew Treloar and Mr Leong Ko. In the Bowater Faculty of Business, Mr Ron Breth, the co-author of *A Business Guide to China*, has received College funding to study the negotiation practices of Australian companies trading with China.

In 1989, the Foundation also awarded Victoria College $400 000 to set up a four year double degree program in Arabic and Business and acquire materials and data. This program is co-ordinated by Mr Hakeem Kasem. A further $9000 was awarded the Indonesian program, headed by Ms Roswitha Khaiyath to establish links between Victoria College and Australian companies trading with Indonesia.

It has been our experience that the goals of modern language courses which aim at communicative skills and understanding can be both practical and intrinsically educational. In fact, the so-called 'utilitarian' approach to language study could well be more a myth than a reality. There is an extent to which learning another language confers a measure of cultural understanding, a point explored later in this paper. More importantly, the process of acquiring cognitive growth in language study is best done through a systematic, complementary approach. The Department of Language and Culture Studies seeks to develop these intrinsic educational values as well as practical skills by devising a degree structure with three main components: the specific language, its concomitant cultural studies and linguistics. In this paper we will consider the particular contribution of



電子工业部第十一設计研究

本副本有效期至一九九〇年七月十四日

中华人民共和国

企业法人

营业执照

存款突破一百亿元之际，特向各位致以亲切的问
承担了原来由人民银行办理的各项业务，成为专
银行。多年来，我们坚持「以改革推动业务发展，
款第一、储户第一、服务第一、信誉第一」的服
工商信贷、会计结算和城镇储蓄的专业
展中深化改革」的指导方针，信守「存
尊敬的储户和朋友们：

(4) 很想了解澳大利亚粮油食品的消费状况、趋势、
争状况等信息。

(5) 我公司很乐意与贵中心建立信

(6) 我们希望贵中心为我们提供国
方面的信息。并希望为我公司与其他公

(7) 公司中固定联系人：焦庆友

八九年　日

中华人民共和国国家工商行政管理局

Chinese documents collected for the China Business Communication Project. *(Kindly supplied by Dept. of Language and Culture Studies, Victoria College)*

a study of linguistics to practical language courses, explore the kinds of 'cultural models' which underlie cross-cultural communication and discuss the implications of these linguistic and cultural presuppositions to curricula in language programs for professional purposes.

## The Contribution of Linguistics to Language Programs

At Victoria College all B.A. students undertaking a minor or major in a language also take a co-requisite unit in Linguistics. The unit of Linguistics is specially designed to:

- introduce students to concepts in Linguistics that will help them to think about the nature and function of language as a system of human communication
- to sufficiently enculturate the students into the discipline of Linguistics so that they learn the metalanguage (or the jargon) that will help them think about language in an analytic way
- to encourage the students to reflect upon and enhance their own language learning. ►

Each week the students are challenged to think about these issues:

- — What is language?
- — What is communication?
- — How do their answers relate to their understanding of the culture of the language they are studying?
- — How is their increasing knowledge of language and reflection upon it enhancing their communicative performance?

In tutorials students of Greek and Hebrew mingle with students of Arabic, Chinese or Indonesian. In the first semester, students are introduced to the basic concepts of linguistics. In the second semester they are required to give formal presentations on systemic or communicative aspects of the particular language they are studying. Discussion can range across topics such as kinship terms in Chinese, measure words in Chinese, forms of address in Indonesian, specific morphophonemic rules in Indonesian, gender in Hebrew, the meaning of the word 'tribe' in Hebrew, case in Greek congratulation routines at a Greek wedding, and analyses of the communicative functions of dialogue in language textbooks. The intention is to encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning, to think about the ways people of different cultures use language for communication, and to ponder the nature of universals across languages.

## Linguistic and Cultural Research for Business Communication

The first three years of language courses at the College aim at a sequential introduction to the systemic features of the language and, although specific professional vocabulary may be included, the aim is to produce graduates with general communicative skills. It is only at the advanced fourth-year level that studies Chinese, Arabic and Indonesian for Business Purposes will be offered. Are language majors of this type or advanced courses in languages for business purposes 'narrowly utilitarian'? Widdowson in *Language Purpose and Language Use* suggests that the difference between trading and education in language teaching is that education provides a rationale while training does not. Education

> '*seeks to provide for creativity whereby what is learned is a set of schemata and procedures for adapting them to cope with problems which do not have a ready-made formulaic solution*' (1983:19)

Widdowson further proposes 'that there are two basic levels of language knowledge, the systemic and the schematic, and that it is the second that serves as the main source of reference in language use' (p. 57). Schemata are defined as 'cognitive structures which constitute communicative competence' (p. 40). Systemic knowledge refers to the structure of the language, comprising its phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. Identifying the schematic level of language within the registers of communciation and interpreting it along with the systemic level into dynamic teaching approaches and materials is the challenge facing teachers of language courses for professional purposes.

Widdowson's interest in 'the cognitive structures which constitute communicative competence' finds parallels in other disciplines such as cognitive psychology and cultural anthropology. For instance, Jerome Bruner, a scholar of human cognition, has noted that 'learning a language involves both learning the culture and learning how to express intentions in congruence with the culture' (1986, p. 65). He notes further that this 'illocutionary' aspect of language (where one indicates what is intended) is the research task of the anthropologist as well as the linguist.

Since the pioneering work of Ferdinand de Saussure, scholars in many disciplines have assumed that in language there is no one-to-one relationship between the word and the object it represents (the signifier and the signified). Some take this idea a step further and argue that language actually plays a role in shaping or even determining the way we view the world and our conceptions of reality (an idea known generally as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis).

Others stress that it is important not to exaggerate this deterministic aspect of language. Edward Said reminds us that the language of a culture is not equivalent to its society, history or intrinsic nature. Learning Arabic is not the magic key to 'the Arab mind', in fact the concept of 'an Arab mind' is dangerous reductionism. With regard to Chinese, for instance, the fact that there are no verbal declensions indicating time frames, definite articles or plural forms does not necessarily mean that the Chinese think differently from Westerners or do not understand time frames, definiteness and plurality. Timothy Light argues that if the Chinese language did indeed determine Chinese conceptions of the world then:

> '*it is highly unlikely that the Chinese race would have survived three or four millenia, since the Chinese would always be in the wrong place with the wrong objects and quite uncertain about whether they were there or not.*' (1983, p. 37)

He goes on to say, however, that the Chinese tendency to indirection and vagueness is intimately linked to Chinese linguistic expression as in the use of negatives to express a positive statement (for instance *bucuo* 'no error' to express the idea 'right you are'). Light concludes that such indirection is a cultural preference which has shaped the linguistic expression not vice-versa. We could add, with Brown and Levinson, that linguistic indirectness is not a unique attribute of Eastern cultures. Even in English, modal verbs and accompanying modifiers offer the speaker a repertoire of degrees of politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1978).

The degree to which one's mother-tongue determines one's conceptual framework cannot be ignored but neither can it be over-stated. We can also use language, either consciously or unconsciously, to mask our true beliefs or feelings. People do not always behave in accordance with the way they articulate their cultural beliefs. Some anthropologists consider that the beliefs or ideas expressed by a community reflect their material circumstances, including power relations, and have the effect of rationalizing, disguising or legitimating modes of behaviour (see the discussion of Holland and Quinn, 1987 p.5). For Holland and Quinn, a fruitful line of approach is to try to arrive at an understanding of the 'cultural models' of a society, that is, the models of the world that are widely shared and assumed within a society, and the way these relate to actual behaviour. 'Cultural models' are the mostly unconscious assumptions which 'frame experience, supply interpretations of that experience and inferences about it, and goals for action' (1987, p.6).

The idea of 'cultural models' helps to explain the commonly-noted phenomenon that perceptions of reality are constrained to a high degree by our culturally-moulded expectations. One of the authors of this article has had the experience of sailing down the Yangtze a number of years ago with a group of fellow foreign students in their twenties from Europe and North America. The young men were quite hirsute: long hair, scraggy beards and moustaches. We were a colourful lot, too, with hair colour ranging from Swedish blonde to platinum gold and honey brown. A couple of local peasants got on board, eyed us with great curiosity and began discussing our strange appearance. We could just make out the southern Mandarin accent.

*'Look at that one!'* The first peasant pointed to the bearded twenty-nine year-old Finnish male student. *'How long would it take to grow hair like that?'*

*'Oh, he must be at least sixty-five'*

*'What about those white-haired ladies?'* ►

The new laboratory for simultaneous interpreting at Victoria College. Lecturer in Arabic, Hakim Kasem (rear booth) conducts a class. *(Photo courtesy of Victoria College)*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Members of the China Business Communication Project at Victoria College. From left to right: Anne McLaren, Andrew Endrey, Lin Naihua, Lin Li, Helen Tebble (rear), Gloria Davis and Leong Ko. *(Photo courtesy of Victoria College)*

> *'Well, that one's got the whitest hair. She must be at least as old'.*
>
> *'Mm, the others are not quite as white, could be forty or fifty years old'.*

The Yangtze peasants, belonging to a smooth-skinned beardless race with black hair, who had probably not seen foreigners at close quarters before, assumed that anyone with long hair and a beard must be of partriarchal age and anyone with 'white hair' (bai – a term used to cover a range of hair colours in the West) must be of similar vintage. As Bruner has observed, there is a strong tendency to assimilate the unknown into a pre-existing ode of perception (1986, p.47).

The sequel to this story is that this writer had lived with a Chinese room-mate for eight months before realising that her black hair had a tinge of red in it. *'Oh, yes, I had a Dutch ancestor'*, she replied. *'Everyone says I have red hair'.*

This nicely illustrates the way that our expectations, assumptions and mother-tongue play a role in shaping our interpretations of the material world, even for something as fundamental as the colours of the spectrum.

If even colours such as red and white prove so complicated when they cross cultural boundaries, this is even more true for the symbolic associations of the words we use. There is a danger in assuming that an aspect of the real world such as the colour of something has universal symbolic associations. The anthropologist, Edmund Leach, for instance, has argued that since palaeolithic times, human beings have associated the colour red with blood and hence with danger (1970, pp. 22-24). This is not the case with Chinese civilisation where red is a life-giving colour. Even prehistorical burial sites were daubed cinnabar red. In the Chinese tradition red is associated with summer, the south, wealth and good fortune. The use made by the Chinese communist party of the image of the red sun, a red flag and Red Guards is an indigenous one, not derived from European Marxism.

Cultural assumptions thus underlie the use of everyday words, and at a greater level of complexity, everyday relations between people. Bruner calls these relations 'transactions' which are defined as 'those dealings which are premised on a mutual sharing of assumptions and beliefs about how the world is, how mind works, what we are up to and how communication should proceed' (1986, p. 57). Relations across cultures, including professional or business negotiations will work better if both parties are aware of the different 'cultural models' underlying the stance of both sides. In doing business with the Chinese, for instance, some awareness of the Chinese concept of face (*mianzi*), courtesy (*kegi*), indirect patters of speech and official ideology (for instance, the official concept of 'co-operation' as it applies to China-West relations) would be of great advantage to a Westerner. An Australian woman, Helen Katsoula, who has successfully carried out business in China, advises would-be China traders to learn the language and to take a longer-term view of their self-interest than the Western model of corporate profit would normally allow:

> '*Many people who come here are totally self-centred: out only to benefit themselves. Most of them are unable to 'take' China and just wither away. You have to get involved outside of your company obligations; you have to do things, make things happen*' (cited in Boye de Mente 1989, p. 46).

The Australian businessman who planted valuable bonsai trees for the enjoyment of his counterparts in China was obviously aware that the success of his enterprise depended on the building up of a long-term relationship which would mature together with the bonsai trees.

## The Implications for Language Curriculum

The idea that underlying human communication are differing 'cultural models' or modes of perception shaped by one's society has important implications for how one learns a language. Vygotsky, for instance, believed that in acquiring a language the student or child must 'borrow' the knowledge and consciousness of the person or parent doing the teaching (Bruner 1986, p. 76). Unlike the preschool child, the second language learner comes to his or her task with a wealth of predispositions and assumptions. It is the task of the second language teacher to instil in the student an awareness of the different cultural models at play in the process of language learning and it should be the ultimate goal of curriculum for communicative skills to reflect this awareness.

In the case of languages such as Chinese, a great amount of primary research into communication across cultures remains to be done, especially with regard to Australia-China communication. The Chinese for Business Communication Project is a beginning. It is anticipated that discourse analysis of the linguistic data collected will reveal the linguistic and schematic nature of various genres of business communication. Suitable teaching methodology will need to be developed, particularly that involving vicarious learning. Students of courses such as Chinese for Business Purposes will need to pay heed to such matters as who pays deference to whom at talk, who initiates talk, who has the last word, when and how to use 'small talk, stylistic formulae as in letters, the steps in each type of speech event. Language studies of this kind can hardly be construed as narrowly utilitarian or dehumanizing. If it is acceptable in the academic world of Arts Faculties for linguistics to study genres and registers of language, then it must be acceptable for advanced-level language students to analyse the genres of the register of business communication for the particular language of study.

Modern theoretical studies in linguistics, cultural anthropology, literary theory and cognitive psychology provide a developing framework for communicative studies in cross-cultural contexts. Each of these disciplines is interested in the subleties of how real human beings, with all their preconceptions and prejudices, communicate or fail to communicate across cultures. The challenge to teachers of language courses for professional purposes is to *communicate* these issues to their students, to pave the way for cognitive development within language courses and devise linguistic and cultural courses which will run in tandem with the language program in order to provide an education of an essentially liberal, humanistic kind in cross-cultural communication.

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# Plain English: Simple or Simplistic

by **Robert D Eagleson**

## Neither!

It may seem strange to accept to write an article under a title that one is going to reject in the first word, but in proposing the title the Editor has perceptively confronted us with the two prominent misunderstandings about plain English – or better still plain language for the same issues affect every language as the drive for plain language is now occurring in many countries.

## Simple

It is true that *simple* can mean 'unadorned, unaffected, not complicated or involved', and to this extent one could not object to its use to describe plain language. But for many it suggests, especially in the context of language, 'homely, bare, elementary lacking in sophistication'. Some would see simple language as more akin to a type of Basic English than to normal English. Indeed there have been a few who have misconceived the demand for plain language as a threat to the richness of the language and a deterioration of standards. Replying in the Victorian Parliament to a speech of the Attorney-General announcing moves to introduce plain language practices into the drafting of legislation, one member of Parliament stated:

> *'I would not like to think that the Government was attempting to lower the standard of the English language presented in our Acts of Parliament as part of a master plan to eliminate some of the more beautiful words in our language.'*

Elsewhere the same member commented on moves for plain English:

> *'There should be no attempt to lower standards in order to satisfy those who take a lazier approach with language.'*

This is to misunderstand the nature of plain language. It is not the opposite of rich, elaborate language, but instead the reverse of obscure, convoluted expression. Plain language writers have available to them all the resources of a language and the full range of terms: they are not confined in any way, and certainly not reduced to the lowest common denominator as some fear. The following extract from a text on insects qualifies as plain even though many of the technical terms would be unknown to most of us:

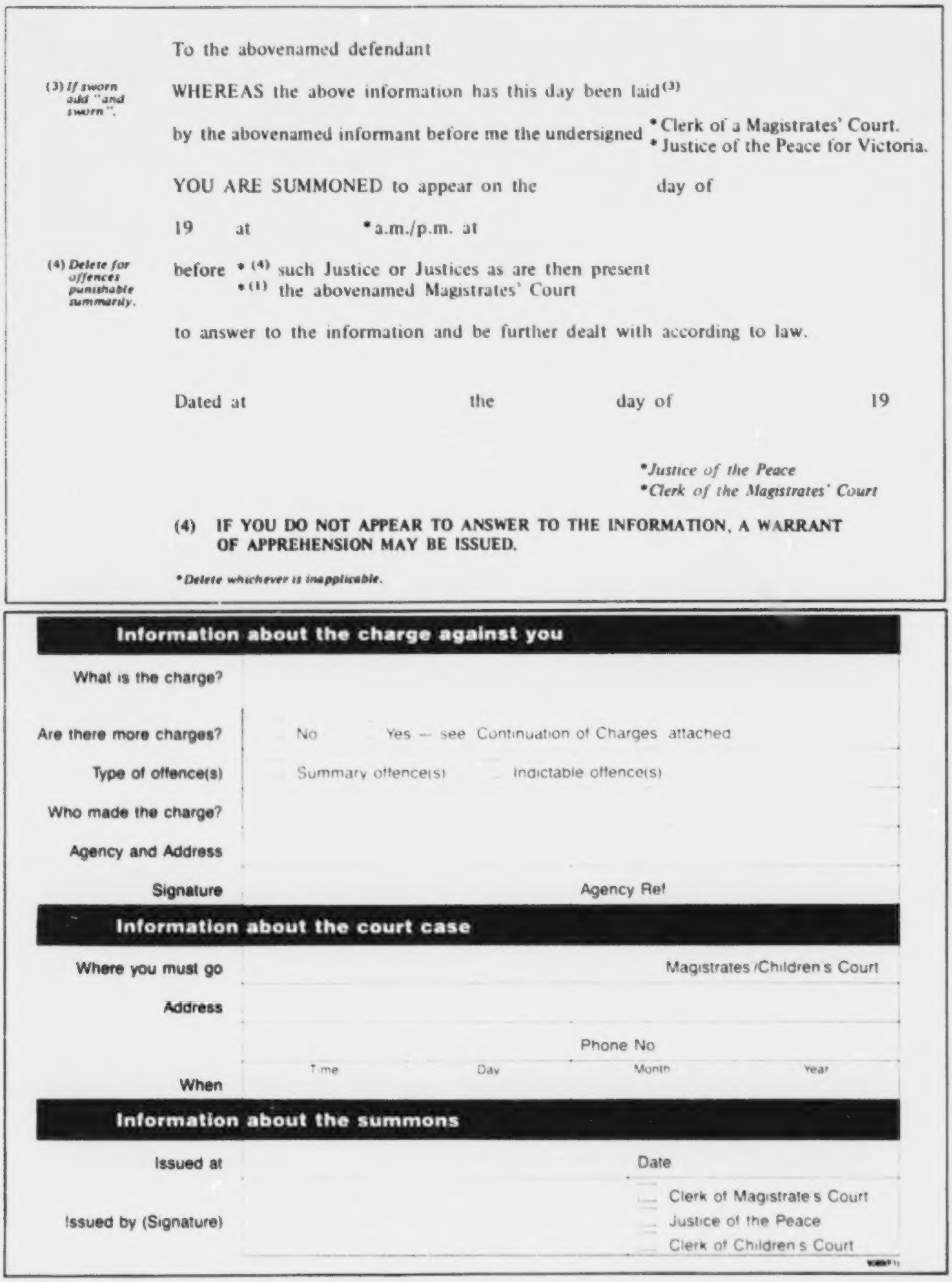
> *'An interesting description of the filamentous gills of elpidopterous larvae is given by Welch (1922), who finds that each gill filament contains a tracheal branch from the main lateral trunk of the tracheal system, and that the inner surface of the gill is covered by innumerable tracheoles lying parallel with one another. Nearly five hundred gill filaments may be present on a single individual of Nymphula obscuralis. The three terminal gills of zygopterous larvae are borne by the epiproct and the paraprocts. Usually they have the form of elongate plates, but in certain species they are vesicular.'*[1]

We can confidently say that this passage is plain because the technical words in it would be well-known to advanced students of insectology for whom the text was written. As well the syntactic structures are straightforward and uninvolved. Even those of us for whom the technical terms are unfamiliar can readily identify the subjects, verbs and objects for example, and consequently can follow the direction of the sentences. We could even answer questions accurately – for example *What do the paraprocts do?* – even though we might not be too certain of what we meant by these answers.

'Plainness in language does not consist of one immutable set of characteristics: its mould in any given context depends on the nature of the audience.'

Plainness then is a relative quality: it depends on the audience. If we are describing a computer program for an audience of novices then we need to include a lot of preliminary information. This material would be easy for experts to understand, but it would be a waste of time for them to have to wade through it to come to the advanced material that they required. It could be a hindrance to their efficiency and therefore is omitted in a text intended for experts.

In a recent leaflet for the general public, on oestrogen therapy the expert writers avoided the term *osteoporosis*. They substituted *loss of bone*, which they presumably thought would be simpler for general readers. They overlooked the fact that *osteoporosis* had become more widely recognised through frequent use in the media, with the result that general readers found it easier to grasp than the less familiar *loss of bone*. Indeed because of their knowledge of *osteoporosis*, they came to interpret *loss of bone* as conveying something more, and in particular had the jocular image of bones suddenly disappearing or falling off. Plainness in language does not consist of one immutable set of characteristics: its mould in any given context depends on the nature of the audience. ►



*(3) If sworn add "and sworn".*

To the abovenamed defendant

WHEREAS the above information has this day been laid(3)

by the abovenamed informant before me the undersigned
*Clerk of a Magistrates' Court.
*Justice of the Peace for Victoria.

YOU ARE SUMMONED to appear on the day of

19 at *a.m./p.m. at

*(4) Delete for offences punishable summarily.*

before *(4) such Justice or Justices as are then present
*(1) the abovenamed Magistrates' Court

to answer to the information and be further dealt with according to law.

Dated at the day of 19

**Justice of the Peace*
**Clerk of the Magistrates' Court*

**(4) IF YOU DO NOT APPEAR TO ANSWER TO THE INFORMATION, A WARRANT OF APPREHENSION MAY BE ISSUED.**

***Delete whichever is inapplicable.***

**Information about the charge against you**

**What is the charge?**

**Are there more charges?** ☐ No ☐ Yes — see Continuation of Charges attached

**Type of offence(s)** ☐ Summary offence(s) ☐ Indictable offence(s)

**Who made the charge?**

**Agency and Address**

**Signature** Agency Ref

**Information about the court case**

**Where you must go** Magistrates'/Children's Court

**Address**

Phone No

**When** Time Day Month Year

**Information about the summons**

**Issued at** Date

**Issued by (Signature)**
☐ Clerk of Magistrate's Court
☐ Justice of the Peace
☐ Clerk of Children's Court

Summons forms: before and after the application of 'plain English'

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This is very much the point of the plain language movement. It insists on the right of the primary audience of a document to be able to understand the document with ease. It reminds writers of their responsibility to be clear as well as accurate. Both qualities are crucial. It is not a question of one being more important than the other. Writers fail as writers and lack professional competence if they do not communicate their message intelligibly no matter how complex the underlying policy or content.

With this requirement in mind we recognise that plainness goes beyond matters of vocabulary – and even sentence length. It encompasses organisation, logical relations, proper focus, coherence, rate and amount of information, and layout. In short, it requires that a passage have all the characteristics of good writing. It does not place standards of linguistic skill in jeopardy; on the contrary it is the careful and successful use of language.

We come to appreciate what plain language is really about if we look at the menu request that was handed out to patients in a British hospital. It included the item:

> *'Patients wanting pancakes should tick the box marked apple flan and custard.'*

None of the words here presents us with any difficulty. Nor is the sentence lengthy or convoluted syntactically. But the request must puzzle readers, especially if they would like apple flan!

> 'There is nothing new, novel or peculiar about plain language. It has always existed.'

Again, what of this item in a recent questionnaire distributed by a higher education institution in Sydney:

> *Do you think that cigarette advertisements have no effect on teenagers?* No Yes

What box do you tick if you think that cigarette advertising has an effect – *Yes* or *No?* Of course most readers can eventually work out which box they should tick, but it is poor writing to put this task unnecessarily onto readers. We need them to concentrate on the problem or the information we are placing before them; we should not be distracting them from the critical task of understanding our message with the obscurity of our language.

Plain language then is not simple language in the sense of homely, rustic, reduced language. Instead it has to do with clarity, readability, ease of understanding – and these qualities in terms of the central audience.

## Simplistic

While there have been documents produced in plain language starting from scratch, to date a lot of plain language activity has been concerned with rewriting documents which had previously been composed in officialese or legalese. The plainer versions are frequently shorter – often much shorter. This has given rise to the impression among some that plain language documents are simplistic or simplified versions of the originals, much as we often find in annual reports of companies or in the introductory parts of prospectuses, etc.

Again there is a misunderstanding. Plain language projects do not have brevity as their goal. Plain language documents seek to protect the rights and reveal the responsibilities of their readers as well as presenting those rights and responsibilities clearly. As a result they have to be complete and accurate statements. Experience has proved that they can be – and are – as accurate and complete as any traditional document. Indeed the very exercise of converting documents into plain English has often exposed gaps in the originals and led to more satisfying plain versions.

If plain English versions of traditional-style documents turn out to be briefer it is only because the task of rewriting has eliminated verbiage and discarded outmoded information. As evidence, consider first this original wording of a provision in the Takeover's Code:

***Extension of time for paying consideration***

**19** *(1)The Commission may, on application made by an offeror before the time by which the consideration specified in the relevant take-over offer is required by the terms of the offer to be paid or provided, fix a later time as the time by which that consideration is to be paid or provided and, where a later time is so fixed, the offer or, if the offer has been accepted, the contract that resulted from the acceptance shall be deemed to be varied accordingly.*

*(2)An offeror shall ensure that the consideration specified in the relevant take-over offer is paid or provided not later than the time by which the consideration is required by the terms of that take-over offer to be paid or provided or, if a later time has been fixed under sub-section (1), not later than the time so fixed.*

Now compare its plain language version:

**2.5 *Obligation to provide consideration unless time is varied***

*(1) An offeror must ensure that the consideration specified in an accepted offer is provided on time*

*(2) The Commission may extend the time for paying the consideration if the offeror applies for an extension before the consideration is due.*

There is no loss of information as we pass from one version to the other: both versions achieve the same legal effect. The reduction that has occurred in the plain version comes first from reorganising the material, which eliminates repetition, and secondly from using more familiar and readily absorbed terms such as *on time*.

> 'Plain language documents seek to protect the rights and reveal the responsibilities of their readers as well as present those rights and responsibilities clearly.'

Or compare these two versions of subsection 112(2) of the *Mental Health Act 1986* (Victoria):

***original***

*Where a community visitor wishes to perform or exercise or is performing or exercising any power, duty or function under this Act, the person in charge and every member of the staff or management of the mental health service must provide the community visitor with such reasonable assistance as the community visitor requires to perform or exercise that power, duty or function effectively.*

***plain***

*Members of the mental health service must give any reasonable help that the community visitor requires to carry out these activities.*

The initial clause in the original is unnecessary – and especially if the context of the whole section is taken into account. It springs from overcaution, and far from consolidating the message serves rather to conceal the central thrust of the subsection. It is verbiage that needs to stripped away to aid precision.

Simplified statements too can be – and should be – plain. But they are different documents with different purposes. They are intended to be shortened statements, presenting a summary of manageable overview. However, they must not be confused with full statements, nor must plain documents be judged to be simplistic or simplified just because they appear to be shorter than the documents they are replacing.

## Who is the real audience for plain English?

Certainly lawyers and judges!

Once more this may seem a startling response because the current demand for plain language arose largely within the consumer movement and had as its prime concern the rights of ordinary citizens who for too long had been subjected to documents which were beyond their capacity. But it is another serious misconception if we believe that plain language has relevance only for these people. It is just as important for professionals. Indeed in past centuries it has been judges who have been among the most vocal in their pleadings with their legal colleagues for comprehensible documents.

Recently the High Court ruled the regulations under the Act governing student assistance obscure. Here were the leading judges in the land being bamboozled by gobbledegook and admitting that they too had difficulty with legalese.

In a test of lawyers in Victoria in 1986, we discovered that they could solve problems in half the time if the relevant legislation was written in plain English. We cannot afford to have professionals spending twice as much the time on a task as is necessary. Moreover there is always the danger readers may come to a false interpretation if they have to struggle to disentangle the language of a text.

> 'If plain English versions of traditional-style documents turn out to be briefer it is only because the task of rewriting has eliminated verbiage and discarded outmoded information.'

In other experiments in Great Britain[2] and the United States[3], scientists and lawyers revealed that they preferred overwhelmingly specialist documents written in a plain style. They found the plainly written documents easier to read, more interesting, more dynamic. What is more, they had a greater confidence in the professional competence of the expert who wrote plainly. But the scientists also indicated that they felt that the traditional style was more appropriate for science. Not only is their view irrational, but it also means that in preparing their papers and reports they are labouring to produce a form of language that is not congenial to them. This suggests that they are having to expend time producing a style which does not properly serve the needs of science, but is only enmeshed in the pursuit of status. In effect we have our professionals involved in a waste of time both at the point of writing and of reading.

None of this is to say that we should discount the immense needs and rights of all citizens to have documents in clear language, but it demolishes the snobbery of the educated, many of whom want to pretend that they are above the need for plain language and consequently dismiss it as simple or simplistic.

## Literates and illiterates

We have entered the International Literacy Year and yet we need to ask ourselves why we spend so much effort on teaching people how to read when we turn around and present them with documents affecting important aspects of their daily lives and participation in the community which are effectively unreadable. Should we be training them rather to read gobbledegook since it is so prevalent and since efforts to promote plain English so regularly meet with opposition and ignorant misconstruction? Should we be broadening our concerns with literacy to encompass all those who have difficulty with comprehending official documents?

We should go further and ask who the illiterates really are. Are they only the ones who cannot read and write? What of the producers of convoluted legalese and officialese – writing that all, including professionals, find hard to read? Are we content with their clumsy, inadequate control of English? There are some in our community who are so ready to fulminate against the lapses of the less well-educated, but who remain so silent about the dreadful abuses perpetrated by the seemingly educated with snobbish, yet false, notions of the language.

There is nothing new, novel or peculiar about plain language. It has always existed. There have always been pleas for it in earlier centuries and in this one. Books such as Gowers *The Complete Plain Words* are continually praised, and legal writers such as Lord Denning in Great Britain and Cardozo in the United States are forever being lauded. While we praise great literature for its richness of vocabulary and syntactic patterning, we also commend it at the same time for its plainness and absence of convolution and prolixity. It is time that we ceased to pay only lip service to this virtue of writing and recognised that plain is good, that it is serious. We should stop being naively impressed by the inflated and high-sounding. We should go to the ideas in a passage and not be deluded by its words. A document is good only if its ideas are brilliant. If it says little, it is empty sounding; if it hides its ideas in verbiage, it is bad writing. It rests with the educated in the community to put their principle into practice. If we really abhor gobbledegook, we will not be found tolerating it in the writing of others, and definitely not in our own writing. It is not a question of being simple or simplistic: it is a question of our knowing how to use our precious language skilfully to communicate our message precisely so that our audience can understand it clearly.

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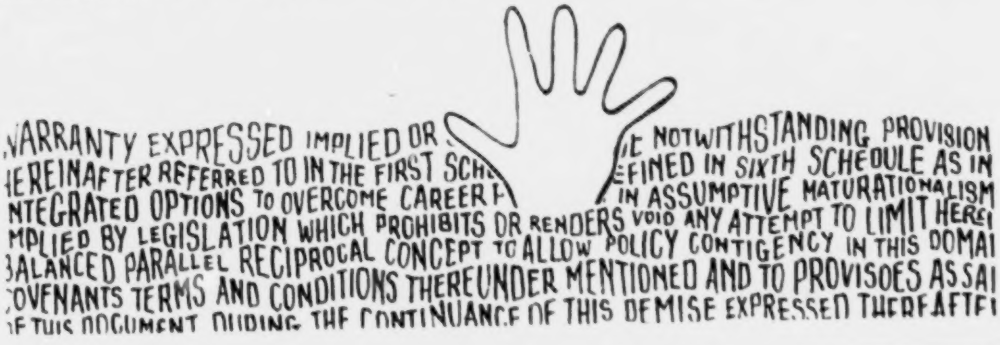
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# The Role of Mother Tongue Literacy in Third Language Learning

by **Merrill Swain, Sharon Lapkin, Norman Rowen, Doug Hart**

## Introduction

The main question this paper addresses is whether the learning of a third language is enhanced through literacy in one's first language. To some, it may seem self-evident that being literate in one's mother tongue will positively impact on the development of literacy skills in another language. However, educational practices in many parts of the world, including many parts of Canada, show no hint of accepting such a statement as self-evident. Indeed examination of the beliefs of many parents, teachers, educational administrators and policy-makers leads one to the contrary conclusion: that learning a second or third language is impeded by knowledge and use of the first language.

As evidence for this belief, consider the following: that many immigrant parents in Canada believe that by speaking or reading to their children in their own language, they will seriously slow down their child's acquisition of English; that initial education in a child's first language (be it Tagalog, Urdu, Arabic, Italian, etc.) is seen as taking time away from the important task of learning a second language – that of the school and society; that it is common practice for teachers to recommend to immigrant parents of children who are having trouble in school to use more English with their children. Such practices belie the possibility of positive transfer from the first language to another one. Similarly, many immigrant parents believe that the learning of a third language (e.g. French) should be deferred until the second (majority) language, in this case English, has been firmly established.

This paper is organized in the following way: first, we consider several research and evaluation studies relevant to the issue which emanate from bilingual education programs for minority language children. Secondly, we describe a study we have recently completed which involved grade eight children who had been enrolled in an English/French bilingual program since grade five. Some of the students in the program acquired a Heritage Language (HL) in the home before they began school,[1] and some of those students acquired literacy skills in their HL either at home or in Heritage Language Programs (HLP)[2] at school. All students in the program were literate in English before beginning the bilingual program. Our study examines their learning of French with respect to i) their literacy knowledge and use of an HL relative to those students who do not have an HL, and ii) the type of HL spoken (Romance versus non-Romance). Furthermore, as it is possible that our observed effects on third language learning may be a consequence of socio-economic variables related to HL proficiency rather than HL literacy per se, we examine these relationships and conclude that literacy in the HL accounts for enhanced performance in third language learning. Fourthly, we briefly explore the implications of our findings as they relate to educational programs for HL children.

## Bilingual Education For Heritage Language Children

Some of the most compelling evidence for the positive impact that mother tongue literacy has on second language learning comes from evaluations of bilingual education programs for HL children. In general, it has been found that children who are initially educated in their HL learn a second language better (and are academically more successful) than those who have no such solid foundation in their first language (Troike, 1981).

Different reasons why this might be so have been posited – some linguistic, others more social and attitudinal, in nature. In the latter category fall such explanations as 'success breeds success'. It is not infrequent that children who are educated in a language they initially do not understand and where many of their classmates are native speakers of the school language, experience failure or fear. Provision of HL schooling provides the opportunity for children to understand their surroundings and experience academic success, self-confidence, a stronger sense of personal worth and positive feelings about school.

Linguistic explanations are more specific with respect to the impact that first language literacy per se may have on second language literacy learning. It is argued, and there is considerable evidence (Ovando and Collier, 1985), that even when two languages use different writing systems, readers are able to apply the visual, linguistic and cognitive strategies they use in first language reading to reading in the second language. 'Readers apply what they figured out about the process in one language to reading in another language' (Hudelson 1987, p.839).

In writing about the benefits of first language literacy, Hudelson (1987) notes two in particular:

'*The first benefit of a strong native language literacy program is that it develops in children an*

This classroom scene is typical of many in Canada's Arctic where children of all races go to school together. *(Photo courtesy National Film Board of Canada)*

> *understanding of what reading and writing are for, using the medium of a language that the children speak fluently and that they have used to make sense of their life experiences to this point in time*
>
> *the task will be more easily accomplished in a language that one speaks fluently, because the reader will be able to make more efficient use of the cueing systems of the language to predict the meaning of written forms (p. 830). The second benefit of using the children's native language is that native language literacy provided the children with resources to use as they moved into second language reading and writing.'* (p. 833).

Cummins (1981) provides a theoretical explanation in his 'linguistic interdependence hypothesis'. He posits that the abilities which underlie the use and interpretation of 'decontextualized' language (of which many literacy activities are prime examples) are crosslingual. Thus for an individual who is acquiring a second language, learning in the first language to use language as a symbolic system – that is, as a means to gain and apply knowledge using language alone, as well as a means to abstract, generalize and classify – does not limit that knowledge, or function, to only the language in which it was learned. In other words, spending time learning in the language one knows best may benefit both languages equally with respect to developing those language-related skills basic to academic progress in our schools.

Let us consider the results obtained from an evaluation of an exemplary bilingual education program. We consider the program to be exemplary as it involved instruction in the HL, including literacy instruction, not only initially, but throughout the six years of the program. The program involved Navajo students in Rock Point in the United States. These students used to be educated in English only, and their performance on standardized tests of English remained below the performance expected for their grade level through elementary schooling. In 1971 a bilingual program was set up in which reading in English was not introduced until grade two after children had learned to read in Navajo. From grade two to grade six, the program involved instruction in both languages. Students were administered standardized tests of English achievement and the results were compared, among other groups, with those of previous students at Rock Point who had not had bilingual education. Rosier and Farella (1976) who evaluated the program conclude that:

> *'Data presented suggest that the effects of continuous bilingual instruction may be cumulative:*

*that while Navajo students who have recently (in 2nd grade) Added reading in English to reading in Navajo may do not better on standardized achievement tests than Navajo students who began reading in English, they do achieve better test scores each year thereafter. Nor does the difference seem to remain the same. The students who learned to read in Navajo and who continue to learn through Navajo and English appear to obtain scores progressively higher in English than those who did not. In effect, their rate of growth helps them to achieve progressively closer to the "national norms" in each grade third through sixth, instead of maintaining a "continuously retarded" level of achievement* (387-388).

In a meta-analysis of 23 studies of bilingual education programs in the United States, Willig (1985) showed that HL students in bilingual programs (i.e. HL English) scored significantly higher than students in unilingual English programs in not only reading in English but in language, mathematics and total achievement as well. (For related findings, see also Troike 1978; Cummins 1981; Cummins, Swain, Nakajima, Handscombe, Green and Tran 1984; Hakuta 1986; Genesee 1987; Krashen and Biber 1988.)

These results are corroborated by studies of immigrant students who arrive in their host country after having had initial schooling in their home country. Skutnabb-Kangas (1979, 1981) found that students who had taken most of their elementary schooling in Finland before moving to Sweden did better in Swedish after two years of study than Finnish students who had been educated in Swedish in Sweden from the first grade. Similarly, Troike (1986) reports on an unpublished study by Gonzalez which found that Mexican children who had had two years of schooling in Mexico before immigrating to the United States did better in English than those who had no schooling prior to immigration.[2]

# The Metropolitan Toronto Study

## a) The Context for the Study

Toronto is a multilingual city: over half the students who enter the English school system in Toronto do not have English as their mother tongue. Many parents of these children feel that although they would like their children to learn both of Canada's official languages, priority must be placed on acquiring the language of the wider community in which they live. In such a context, it has been suggested that a program which begins instruction using English and introduces French as a language of instruction around grade four or five would be more suitable than an early total immersion program. One such bilingual program which begins at grade five exists in the Metropolitan Separate School Board (MSSB) in Toronto.

The MSSB instructs children initially through English, and then in grade five, the students enter a bilingual program where for half the day instruction is in English and for the other half of the day instruction is in French. From grades one to four, the students in the bilingual program had exposure to French through short daily periods (i.e. 20 to 40 minutes) of French as a second language ("core French).

The main question our study sought to answer was what the French language proficiency of the MSSB students at grade eight was like relative to students in an early total French immersion program. To do this, data were collected in three other boards of education in the Metropolitan Toronto area which had an early immersion program. (See Hart, Lapkin and Swain 1987a for an account of the full study and the results obtained.) However, for purposes of this paper we will focus only on data obtained from the MSSB students, because it is only in this Board of Education where the number of children whose home language is other than English or French and who were enrolled in a bilingual program is sufficient to warrant analyses based on home language use and literacy practices.[3]

Data were collected from sixteen MSSB grade bilingual classes[4] involving 380 students. Of the 380 students, 319 students completed the student questionnaire and language tests of writing, reading and listening skills in French.[5] Tests involving speaking in French were administered to a random sample of eight students in each class plus any HL students who were not in the random sample of eight, for a total of 210 students.[6]

## b) Questions Addressed

As we have seen from the brief review of the literature on bilingual education, there is considerable evidence which indicates that the learning of second language literacy skills is enhanced through having developed such skills in the first language. To our knowledge, however, there are no studies which examine the impact of first language (HL) literacy knowledge and use on third language learning, particularly in the context where all those studied have learned to read in at least one other language – in this case English, their language of initial schooling. Furthermore, as the third language in question is French, it is of interest to ask if there is differential impact on its acquisition depending on whether the HL is a Romance or non-Romance language.

Also, in the present study, we are able to begin to tease apart the impact of HL use which does not include literacy activities from HL use which does include them. In so doing, we are able to address the issue of the additional impact HL literacy has above and beyond that provided by the oral use of heritage language.

> 'It is not infrequent that children who are educated in a language they initially do not understand and where many of their classmates are native speakers of the school language, experience failure or fear.'

Finally, as literacy practices in the home tend to be associated with socio-economic class, it is important to investigate the extent to which our findings may be confounded with socio-economic variables. If there are third language learning differences associated with HL literacy practices, it is possible that these differences relate as strongly to socio-economic variables as they do to literacy per se. Therefore, we will examine the degree to which HL literacy practices are associated with key socio-economic status (SES) variables such as parents' level of education and their occupations.

## c) Measures Used

The instruments used to collect the French language and background data were developed for this particular study. Tests which measured both receptive (listening, reading) and productive (speaking, writing) skill areas were prepared and pilot-tested prior to their use in the main study. We sought to make the set of tests as communicative as possible while using formats which would allow specification of psychometric characteristics. This involved using quasi-realistic materials and providing thematic links between tasks where possible.

The test set consisted of a Test de Comprehension Auditive (TCA) for assessing listening comprehension; a Test de Mots a Trouver (TMT) – a cloze test measuring reading comprehension; 'open' writing and speaking tasks; and a sentence repetition task. The open writing task immediately follows the cloze test and is thematically linked to it. The open speaking task follows the sentence repetition exercise, both of which are thematically linked to different passages of the listening test. Additionally, students completed a questionnaire that asked, among other things, for information relating to the occupations and educational levels of their parents as well as for information about languages other than English and French used at home and their frequency and type of use.

### i) Test de Mots a Trouver (TMT)

The TMT is a cloze test based on a text concerning the 'Abominable Snowman' or 'Yeti' purportedly residents in the Himalayas. The original text was drawn from a French Reader's Digest article.

The scoring procedure yielded a maximum score of 25, using the 'acceptable' method of scoring. The acceptable responses were based on those obtained from pilot data from immersion classes and from two Quebec francophone classes and reviewed by at least two adult francophones.

### ii) Open Writing Task

The context for the writing task incorporates the theme of the TMT: students are asked to state what they thought about reports about 'strange creatures' and specifically, their own opinion about whether the 'Yeti' exists and reasons for this view.

Several measures were obtained from the writing of the students. First, the number of words written were counted. Secondly, an error count was made of the non-homophonous grammatical errors (that is, errors which would sound incorrect if spoken). This measure gives some indication of the students' control over the written manifestations of grammatical knowledge. Thirdly, a global judgement of 'good' writing was made which involved two dimensions: complexity of sentence structure and phrasing, and incidence of spelling, grammatical and syntactic errors. A rating of 0 indicated use of simple sentence structures and a high number of grammatical errors, whereas a rating of 3 indicated use of complex sentence structures and relatively few grammatical errors.

### iii) Test de Compréhension Auditive (TCA)

The TCA requires students to answer multiple choice questions based on passages to which they have just listened. The passages are recordings of actual French radio broadcasts including, for example, a news items, a weather forecast and a segment of an interview. A mix of male and female voices are heard. There are 15 questions in total based on seven passages. Students listen to the passage twice and then hear the question twice. The multiple-choice answer options are presented to the students in written form as they are listening to the questions, thus providing them the possibility of increasing their comprehension through access to written text of the questions.

### iv) Open Speaking Test

The context for the speaking task is the last passage of the TCA, which is an interview with a Quebec student of Italian home background regarding parental strictness. In the speaking task, students are asked to comment on the strictness of their own and or their friends' parents and to provide examples. The speaking task was administered individually to a random sample of students, always in a session following the administration of the TCA. The speech samples of the students were scored for fluency. A four point scale was used, with '0' reflecting poor 'attack' skills (debit), uneven rhythm, inappropriate stress patterns, and use of frequent and prolonged pauses often in inappropriate places. The top rating of '3' reflects native-like rate of speech, rhythm, stress and intonation patterns, use of liaison, and avoidance of overly long pauses in appropriate places.

### v) Sentence Repetition Task

In this task, students first read a (slightly modified from the original) text of an actual French language weather broadcast. The written text was then withdrawn and the weather bulletin was heard in its entirety. Next each sentence was played separately and the student attempted to repeat it. Thus as with the TCA, this task, which in order to reconstruct sentences for repetition involved comprehension of the French spoken, ' included the possibility of making use of written text to support comprehension of the spoken passage. ➤

Young Eskimo and Indian children in the Federal School at Inuvik, North West Territories. *(Photo courtesy National Film Board of Canada)*

Two scores were obtained from the sentence repetition data which are of particular interest here. First, a score of 1 was given if the meaning of the sentence was conveyed even if the exact wording of the original sentence was not given. Otherwise, the student obtained a score of 0. The scores were summed across sentences, making 10 the maximum possible. This score was considered to indicate, along with the TCA, the students' understanding of spoken French. Secondly, correct reproduction of specific syntactic features, discursive features, compulsory liaisons and syncopes (the dropping of the mute 'e' in speech) were counted. Across all the sentences, 21 occasions of the particular features singled out for exact repetition occurred, thus making the total possible score 21. This measure was considered as an indication of the students' spoken French proficiency.

### vi) Parental Level of Education

As indicated above, students were asked to complete a questionnaire. Students were asked to indicate for each of their parents separately the highest level of education that they had obtained. There were 8 levels: elementary,some high school, high school diploma, some community college or business technical school, graduation from community college or business technical school, some university, university degree, and graduate or professional degree.

### vii) Parental Occupational Status

As part of the same questionnaire, students were asked to indicate separately for each of their parents what kind of work they do. Examples of homemaker, plumber, nurse, bank teller and doctor were given. The occupational responses (excluding non labour force categories) were coded according to the Porter-Pineo Scale (Pineo, Porter and McRoberts, 1977) as revised to fit 1980 census categorization. Both the occupational status and educational attainment questions were sent home for completion with parents.

### viii) Heritage Language Use: Literacy

Students were asked a number of questions in order to determine HL use patterns. To obtain categories which would indicate literacy knowledge in the HL, information from several questions was combined. The questions used asked students to list what languages, not counting English and French, they understand in written and spoken form; and to indicate the main ways in which these languages are used (for example, speaking to parents, writing to relatives, watching TV, reading letters or newspapers). Using this information, four categories were derived:

1. no HL;
2. HL but unable to understand the written form of it (HL non-lit);
3. can understand HL in the written form and did not indicate any use of the written form (HL lit non-user);
4. understands and uses HL in the written mode (HL lit user).

### ix) Heritage Language Use: Frequency

Our 'frequency of use' variable is based on information derived from asking students how often English and any other language is spoken in their home. Students then circled one of five categories for each language: never, hardly ever, sometimes, about half the time, most of the time. For purposes of analysis in this study, we grouped the responses into two categories: 1. infrequent (never, hardly ever and sometimes) and 2. frequent (about half the time and most of the time).[10]

## d) Results

### i) Impact of Heritage Language Literacy

Table 1 shows mean scores on the French proficiency tests for the four categories defined by use of a Heritage language (see above). Overall, the results show that literacy knowledge in the HL, regardless of whether learners are currently making use of those literacy skills, has a strong positive impact on the learning of a third language. Generally speaking there is little difference between those who have no HL and those who do have an HL but cannot read or write it. This is the case, even though all students have at least one language of literacy – English.

The first five measures shown on Table 1 deal with tests directly involving literacy skills. The next three measures represent results from tests involving primarily listening comprehension but given the manner of test administration they involve the use of literacy skills to provide additional information and context to the task at hand. The last measure is purely a measure of spoken French proficiency in which the task itself involved no reading or writing. With one exception (non-homophonous errors), the differences are significant at p.002.

The results for the TMT (cloze) illustrate clearly the pattern of results noted above for most measures: there is virtually no difference between those students who have no HL and those who do but who have no literacy skills in it. Similarly, there is little dif-

| Measure | No HL X | No HL N | HL non-lit X | HL non-lit N | HL lit non-user X | HL lit non-user N | HL lit X | HL lit N | sig.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Reading** | | | | | | | | | |
| TMT (max = 25) | 9.82 | 119 | 9.89 | 46 | 13.15 | 47 | 12.87 | 99 | .000 |
| **Writing** | | | | | | | | | |
| Word count | 57.66 | 119 | 55.70 | 46 | 72.11 | 47 | 69.96 | 99 | .000 |
| Non-homophonous errors | 2.47 | 118 | 2.28 | 46 | 1.77 | 47 | 2.21 | 99 | .128 |
| Global (% '0') | 29.1 | 34 | 34.8 | 16 | 12.8 | 6 | 9.1 | 9 | .002 |
| Global (% '3') | 5.1 | 6 | 8.7 | 4 | 17.0 | 8 | 15.2 | 15 | |
| **Comprehension** | | | | | | | | | |
| TCA (max = 15) | 7.92 | 119 | 7.63 | 46 | 9.62 | 47 | 8.83 | 99 | .001 |
| Global understanding (max = 10) | 3.35 | 49 | 3.93 | 40 | 5.67 | 36 | 5.66 | 85 | .000 |
| **Speaking** | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Features Repeated (max = 21) | 4.82 | 49 | 3.65 | 40 | 5.39 | 36 | 7.21 | 85 | .000 |
| Fluency (0–3) | 1.07 | 44 | .89 | 38 | 1.39 | 36 | 1.44 | 82 | .001 |

* Based on one-way analysis of variance for all measures except the global writing scores; for the latter, the significance level is for the chi-square value for the cross tabulations of the global written measure with HL groups.

**Table 1** Proficiency Measures by Heritage Language Literacy Groups

ference between those who are literate in their HL but claim not to be involved currently in literacy activities and those who are literate and make use of those skills. This pattern is also seen with respect to the length of the 'opinion' statements in French (word count), listening comprehension (TCA and global understanding) and speaking (total features repeated and fluency). Subsequent analyses on these measures comparing the mean of student scores in the no HL and HL non-lit groups with the mean of students' scores in the HL lit non-user and HL lit user groups revealed a highly significant difference (p.002) in all cases.

The fourth and fifth measures shown on Table 1 indicate that among those with no HL, 29.1% obtained a '0' (write using simple sentences with numerous grammatical errors) while only 5.1% obtained a '3' (write complex sentences with few grammatical errors). Similarly, among those who have an HL but are not literate in it, 34.8% obtained a '0' while only 8.7% obtained a '3'. These figures contrast with those who are literate in an HL: a considerably lesser proportion obtain scores of '0' (12.8% for HL lit non-user and 9.1% for HL lit user) and a somewhat higher proportion obtain scores of '3' (17.0% for HL lit non-user and 15.2% for HL lit user) thus corroborating the pattern noted with the other measures of French proficiency.

The exception to the pattern noted is with non-homophonous errors. The figures in Table 1 represent error counts (and therefore the lower the figures, the better the results). The results shown in Table 1 are non-significant, indicating that having a mother tongue in which one can or cannot engage in literacy activities makes no difference to the number of grammatical or non-homophonous spelling errors the students make while writing in French. As this measure would appear to represent the most 'surface level' technical' features of written language tested — which are, in effect, language specific — it may be that prior literacy experience has little transferability.

To summarize, it appears that HL literacy has a generalized positive effect on third language learning; that is, its positive impact is not limited to literacy-related activities in the third language. What appears to be crucial is to be able to read/write in the HL as opposed to be making current use of such knowledge. Furthermore, our results suggest that the effect is related to literacy knowledge (whether currently used or not) rather than oral proficiency in the HL.

### ii) Relationship Between HL Frequency of Use and Literacy Knowledge

One issue in interpreting the above findings is whether the results could be due simply to a general high level of proficiency in the mother tongue,[11] or whether they are specifically due to the impact of HL literacy.

In order to tease apart general HL proficiency as a variable and HL literacy as a variable, we examined

| | HL non-lit | | HL lit | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Measure** | $\bar{X}$ | N | $\bar{X}$ | N | sig. |
| **Reading** | | | | | |
| TMT (max = 25) | 10.39 | 18 | 13.14 | 96 | .046 |
| **Writing** | | | | | |
| Word count | 54.06 | 18 | 71.58 | 96 | .021 |
| Non-homophonous errors | 1.61 | 18 | 2.07 | 96 | .304 |
| **Comprehension** | | | | | |
| TCA (max = 15) | 7.39 | 18 | 9.11 | 96 | .036 |
| Global understanding (max = 10) | 3.72 | 18 | 5.78 | 85 | .004 |
| **Speaking** | | | | | |
| Total Features Repeated (max = 21) | 3.94 | 18 | 7.08 | 85 | .006 |
| Fluency (0 – 3) | 1.18 | 17 | 1.44 | 82 | .193 |

* Frequency of HL use in the home is 'about half the time' or 'most of the time'.

**Table 2** Proficiency Measures by Heritage Language Literacy Groups for Students Proficient in their Heritage Language*

test scores as a function of frequency of use and literate versus non-literate background. Doing so involved making the assumption that students who report frequent use (about half the time, most of the time) of an HL in the home are proficient in that language. Specifically, we looked to see if, among those who reported their HL to be frequently used in the home, there was a tendency for those who are also literate in their HL to do better on test measures relative to those who are not. Results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that with the exception of non-homophonous errors and fluency in speaking, differences between proficient HL students who are literate in their HL and those who are not, are statistically significant (p .05). Thus, it appears that HL literacy has an enhancing effect on third language learning independent from that of overall general HL proficiency.

### iii) Relationship Between HL Literacy and SES Variables

Literacy knowledge and use have frequently been found to be positively associated with socio-economic variables. That is to say, the more literate behaviour a child adult engages in, the greater the probability that the child adult comes from a high SES home background. What this means is that, for the most part, in studies investigating the relationship between literacy and background variables, SES and literacy have been confounded. In such a case, it is impossible to know whether the relationship found is due to SES variables or to literacy per se.

For this reason, we considered it important to investigate the relationship between certain SES variables and literacy among our students. Our approach to this task was to do cross-tabulations of our four-category literacy variable against a number

**Table 3** Distribution of Fathers' Highest Educational Level (Polar Categories) Within Heritage Language Literacy Groups

| | elementary or some high school | university or graduate/ professional degree |
|---|---|---|
| no HL | 13.4% | 39.2% |
| HL non-lit | 23.8% | 21.4% |
| HL lit non-user | 33.4% | 25.7% |
| HL lit user | 31.0% | 28.7% |

**Table 4** Distribution of Fathers' Occupation (Polar Categories) Within Heritage Language Literacy Groups

| | semiskilled or unskilled workers | managers or professionals |
|---|---|---|
| no HL | 13.5% | 31.7% |
| HL non-lit | 22.2% | 15.6% |
| HL lit non-user | 34.1% | 18.2% |
| HL lit user | 31.9% | 19.1% |

of SES indicators: fathers' educational level, mothers' educational level, fathers' occupation and mothers' occupation. As the pattern of results for mothers' and fathers' educational attainment and for mothers' and fathers' occupation are similar, only the results pertaining to fathers are given in the tables. Furthermore, only the extremes of the SES categories are shown, as little additional information is gleaned from the presentation of all the categories. The results are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3 considers the highest level of education attained by fathers cross-tabulated with language literacy abilities of their children. Two categories of educational attainment are shown: fathers who have had elementary school and/or who have had some high schooling; fathers who have completed a university and/or who have completed a graduate or professional degree. Table 4 shows fathers' occupation cross-tabulated against the language literacy background of their children. Results are presented for two broad polar occupation categories: managers or professionals and semiskilled or unskilled workers.

Tables 3 and 4 present data indicating the effects we have thus far ascribed to HL literacy are not, in fact, the masked effects of socio-economic status. First, among students who have an HL, those literate in it are not disproportionately drawn from high SES families in comparison to HL non-lit students. There is a broad similarity in the distributions of fathers' education and fathers' occupation for HL lit and HL non-lit students. The proportion of university-educated fathers is somewhat higher for HL literate students (25.7% and 28.7% versus 21.4%), but so too is the proportion of fathers without a high school diploma (33.4% and 31.0% versus 23.8%). In the case of fathers' occupation, the main difference between HL literate and non-lit students is the somewhat higher proportion of the former (34.1% and 31.9% versus 22.2%) whose fathers hold semiskilled or unskilled jobs. In summary, HL literate and non-literate students have broadly similar distributions regarding SES background. Thus, among students who have an HL, differences in third language proficiency associated with HL literacy cannot be ascribed to SES.

Tables 3 and 4 also indicate that SES is not a credible candidate for explaining differences in third language proficiency between those literate in an HL and students without an HL. In comparison to students with no knowledge of an HL, a greater proportion of HL literate students have fathers who lack a high school diploma; a smaller proportion have fathers with a university degree. As Table 4 shows, a similar pattern appears regarding fathers' occupation. Fathers of HL literate students are more likely to hold semiskilled or unskilled jobs and less likely to hold managerial or professional jobs than fathers of students with no knowledge of an HL.

Thus, although it might be predicted that having parents with higher levels of formal education or more prestigious occupations and no HL would favour a student's performance of French language tests, as we have seen from the test results, this is not the case.

### iv) Impact of Romance versus Non-Romance Heritage Language

A reasonable assumption about the influence of one language on the learning of another is that positive

**Table 5** French Proficiency Measures by Heritage Language Background (Romance versus Non-Romance)

| | Language Background | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Measures** | **Romance** | **N** | **Non-Romance** | **N** | **Sig** |
| **Reading** | | | | | |
| TMT (max = 25) | 13.50 | 86 | 12.40 | 55 | .201 |
| **Writing** | | | | | |
| Word count | 74.51 | 86 | 65.49 | 55 | .060 |
| Non-homophonous errors | 2.01 | 86 | 2.18 | 55 | .584 |
| **Comprehension** | | | | | |
| TCA (max = 15) | 9.48 | 86 | 8.56 | 55 | .097 |
| Global understanding (max = 10) | 6.05 | 73 | 5.02 | 44 | .048 |
| **Speaking** | | | | | |
| Total features Repeated (max = 21) | 7.30 | 73 | 6.45 | 44 | .309 |
| Fluency (0 – 3) | 1.57 | 72 | 1.21 | 42 | .013 |

transfer will be more likely to occur between two related languages than between two unrelated languages. We decided to explore this issue by examining the differential impact on the learning of French — a Romance language — of having a Romance versus non-Romance HL.

The students forming the Romance HL group reported using one of the following Heritage languages: Italian, Spanish, or Portuguese. The students forming the non-Romance HL group reported using one of the following Heritage languages: German, Polish, Hebrew, Filipino Tagalog, Chinese, Greek or Korean.

The results are shown in Table 5. The first point to note about the figures in Table 5 is that in all cases there is a trend for Romance HL students to do better on the French proficiency measures than non-Romance HL students. However, the difference between these two groups is significant (p .05) in only two cases: global understanding and fluency. Thus, although the results are in the expected direction, they are not strongly supportive of the hypothesis that positive transfer is more likely to occur when the first language is from the same language "family" as the language being learned.

## Discussion

The research reported in this paper strongly supports the claim that literacy in one's mother tongue enhances third language learning. It appears from this study that there is an effect of first language literacy per se independent of first language oral aural language skills, independent of general level of HL proficiency and independent of the linguistic historical relationship between the two languages.

Four points are particularly worthy of note from the findings of this study. First, it is clear that literacy in the HL adds something above and beyond literacy in the second language. This is to say, all the students in the study had learned to read in English, their initial language of schooling. Yet literacy in the HL appears to have contributed to a generalized higher level of proficiency in the third language. It is one of the weaknesses of the current study that we do not know when the HL students learned to undertake literacy activities in their HL: for some it is highly probable that they learned these skills in Heritage Language Programs (see footnote 2) at school. This means that, for them, HL literacy might not be their language of initial literacy. However, it might well be that HL literacy provides them with a fuller understanding of 'what reading and writing are for, using the medium of a language that (they) speak fluently' (Hudelson 1987, p. 830). Additionally, it may give them a feeling of success, pride and self confidence, which, as we have suggested, may breed further success.

Secondly, it appears from our results that knowledge of HL literacy skills is as important as whether one is currently making use of them. This finding supports the notion of 'linguistic interdependence'. So too, does, our third point: that transfer appears least likely to occur with 'surface level language specific' aspects of language. What is interdependent is knowledge and process.

Fourthly, in the sample of students we considered in this research, SES does not appear to be confounded with HL literacy practises. This may be because HL literacy has been learned by some at school. Whatever the reason, it is unusual to be able to unconfound these two variables. We therefore place a great deal of importance on the finding that third language learning is enhanced through first language literacy, independent of SES variables.

Our results contribute to the growing literature which indicates that bilingual education programs that promote first language literacy have an overall positive effect on the learning of other languages. They represent an extension of the findings that when the second language is required for academic success and participation in the target language society, the provision of a sound first language basis which includes literate activities is a wise investment.

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**Notes:**

1. Current terminology used to refer to the first, second or third language learned by a child is somewhat of a nightmare. For example, in some Ontario boards of Education the term 'third language' is used to refer to the students' first language. In this case the term 'third language' has arisen because, from the school's point of view, the students' first school language is English, their 'second language' is French, leaving only the term 'third language' to refer to the language the child came to school knowing, if it was other than English or French. Other terms which have been used to refer to a student's first language in the literature and in school policy statements in Canada and the United States include 'home language', 'mother tongue', 'native language', 'minority language' and 'heritage language'. In this paper, in order to reduce confusion to a minimum, we have opted to use the term 'Heritage Language' (HL) to refer to the first language a child learns if that language is other than English or French. For these students, English is their second language and French is their third language. For students who do not have an HL, then English is their first language and French is their second language. Given that the focus of this paper in on HL students, children whose first language is English are referred to as 'no HL' students.
2. In Ontario, there exist Heritage Language Programs (HLPs). These programs are primarily intended for HL children as an

opportunity to develop further their HL skills and to learn about their HL culture They are typically offered optionally as an after school class for a half hour daily or as a Saturday morning session In a few cases, however, they are offered as a daily half hour class integrated into the school day It is likely that at least some of the HL students in our study learned their HL literacy skills through their participation in an HLP

3. It should be noted that we have made no mention of French immersion programs in our discussion of bilingual education programs That is because a distinction is typically made between bilingual education programs for majority language children and minority language (or in the terminology of this paper, HL) children (see, for example, Swain 1981) allowing for the fact that to produce bilingual individuals in the context of the present discussion that the performance in French of early immersion students and late immersion students by the end of high school is quite similar particularly in literacy related tests (Swain and Lapkin 1986, Wesche, Morrison, Pawly and Ready 1986), thus suggesting once again that rapid progress can be made in the acquisition of literacy skills in a second language once a firm foundation has been established in the first language

4. This in itself may be taken as some evidence of parents' commonsense understanding that their HL children are likely to profit from the later introduction of French While other factors are undoubtedly at work, it is noteworthy that the proportion of HL children in early immersion programs is extremely small relative to the MSSB bilingual program

5. There were in fact twenty two grade eight bilingual classes in the population Six classes did not participate in the research because they were in schools which had been involved in a recent provincial review of immersion education

6. The reduction from 380 to 319 students is due mainly to the fact that parental permission was sought for each student's participation in the study Approximately 16% of the parents refused to allow their child to participate (or did not complete the form requesting permission We consider the 84% participation to be high under the circumstances Of the 319 students who did participate, numbers vary slightly for different language tests due to absentees and for different questionnaire responses due to non or uninterpretable responses

7. Again numbers vary slightly for different language tests due to absentees and for different questionnaire responses due to non or uninterpretable responses

8. On this point, see Hart, Lapkin and Swain 1987b

9. All sentences used were too long to allow reproduction from short term memory

10. There were 38 students who listed an HL but gave no information as to the frequency of usage Therefore these 38 students were excluded in this categorization

11. See Cummins (1976) where he argues that above a certain 'threshold' level proficiency in a first language will benefit second language learning

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# Maori Bilingual Education and Language Revitalization

by ***Bernard Spolsky***

In a recent book on language and ethnicity. Fishman (1984:45) cites New Zealand and its Maoris as a 'successful' case of 'translinguification', arguing that Maori ethnnic identity seemed to be surviving the reported loss of the Maori language.[1] A hundred years after the educational system had started to discourage the use of the language[2], the stage had finally been reached in which, as Benton (1981:17) reported, there were only a few communities where young Maori children still spoke their language natively.[3] By all accounts, then, in the late 1970's, Maori seemed to have become an excellent case for scholars wanting to study the process of language death. But, a few short years later, it is now apparent that the obituaries were premature: a sudden flurry of community-encouraged activities,[4] with some public and government support,[5] is promising to make Maori one of the few languages to rise from its death-bed, revived and revitalized as a living language.

The shift away from the use of Maori started in the middle of the nineteenth century after the European conquest of New Zealand, but the process of loss was at first slow. The strength of Maori resistance in the New Zealand Wars, Belich (1986:310) argues, served to slow the pace and mitigate the effects of subjugation, making it more possible for the Maori people to preserve their 'language, culture, and identity' and providing a basis for the 'social and political resurgence' that came later. One early result of this resurgence was a Maori insistence that their language be taught in secondary schools. There was continuing resistance to language loss until the middle of this century, but eventually the pressure of using only English from the earliest school years and its growing use in the community proved too strong. Language loss was hastened when large numbers of Maoris moved to the cities, and spread when some Maoris moved back to the country bringing with them the city values that stressed the need for speaking English.

In the early 1970's, the final blow to continued language vitality may well have been the promotion of the use of English in the pre-school Play Centre movement, in which Maori mothers were urged to speak English to their children. This was reinforced by the spread of television. As a result, by the 1970's, the youngest native speakers of Maori were starting to grow older, there were no signs of a new generation of children growing up speaking the language, and the prospects for language survival were becoming dimmer.

The movement for revival and revitalization appeared in the early 1980's. Graeme Kennedy (personal communication) explains the background for the revival as follows:

> *'The U.S. Civil Rights movement of the 1960's and 1970's flowed on to New Zealand and combined with the very strong anti-apartheid movement here (witness the Springbok [South African Rugby Football] tour!) to give a background in the early 1980's to mounting concern that Maoris were bearing the brunt of unemployment, prison statistics, etc. The urban migration had depleted maraes (traditional villages), and there was fear of cultural death. Many younger and middle-aged Maoris expressed their embarrassment at not knowing enough Maori language to be able to bury the dead with dignity at tangihanga (traditional wakes), for example. The pakeha (European) guilt at the possibility of cultural genocide resulted in their being quite a warm response to such tokenism as Maori Language Week, the official adoption by Government of standards of Maori pronunciation for place names, etc.'*

An example of what could be done was provided by the immigration to New Zealand of increasing numbers of Pacific Islanders who had been more successful in maintaining their various Polynesian languages which are closely related to Maori.[6] For all these reasons, there developed a strong concern for teaching the Maori language again to young children.

One possible model were the four Maori bilingual programmes already in existence, but their impact was local and they did not seem to be suitable for widespread innovation, because they depended in large measure on children who came to school speaking Maori or already bilingual.[7] In the majority of other communities, this was not the situation: not only young Maori children but also their young parents were by then speakers of English.

Initial efforts to use elementary schools for the purpose of language revival appear not to have been successful:

> *'In the New Zealand situation, while the number of native Maori speakers has been progressively falling, government educational authorities and Maori leaders have sought to stage a revival in the school use of Maori. The children, however, are growing up in a predominantly English language world . . .'* (Ritchie and Ritchie 1979:140)

The solution proposed to this impasse was to start teaching the children even before they went to school. A meeting of Maori leaders, sponsored by the Department of Maori Affairs in 1981, suggested the establishment of all-Maori-language pre-school groups, in which older Maoris, fluent speakers of the language, would conduct the programmes and make up for the fact that the majority of Maori parents could no longer speak their language.

The first kohanga reos or 'language nests' were set up in 1981.[7] The Department of Maori Affairs provided some encouragement and financial support, but the full weight of local organization and implementation fell on any community that wanted its own programme. There were four experimental centres started in 1982; two years later, there were over 280 in existence; and by 1987 nearly five hundred centres were operating. The Department helps fund these programmes, the allocations being made by an independent trust, but control is essentially local. The effect of the kohanga reos cannot be exaggerated: where six years ago a bare handful of children came to primary school with any knowledge of the Maori language, now each year between two and three thousand children, many of them fluent bilinguals, start school after having already been exposed to daily use of the Maori language for three or more years.

Accompanying this educational activity, political and legal pressure has been brought to bear to support the language revitalization process. Although a 1974 amendment to the Maori Affairs Act had recognized Maori as 'the ancestral language of that portion of the population of New Zealand of Maori descent,' Benton (1979) points out a number of court cases established that this had no practical meaning. However, in a landmark decision in 1986, the Waitangi Tribunal[9] held that the Crown had failed in its promise made in the Treaty of Waitangi to protect the Maori language.[10] It recommended (among other things) that Maori be made an official language, available as a language of instruction in schools, and watched over by a Maori Language Commission.

The findings have now started to be implemented: Maori has been declared an official language of New Zealand[11] and a Maori Language Commission, Te Komihana mo te Reo Maori, chaired by Professor Timoti S. Karetu, has been set up. In addition, Maori is starting to become available as a language of instruction in New Zealand schools, a move supported by parental pressure and recognized by the Department of Education.[12]

## Bilingual Education

There are a number of common misconceptions about bilingualism including the notion that bilingualism is unusual or a disadvantage,[13] or that it means equal skill and ability in two language.[14] There is also a misconception in the notion that bilingual education somehow means equal use of two languages. The realities are different: individuals have a complex set of abilities, knowledge and habits in several varieties of language, generally using one variety in certain domains and another for different functions. Communities then are definable as complex patterns of language repertoires. Studies by scholars such as J. A. Fishman,[15] have shown how varieties are divided in usage not just demographically (where various communities have their own languages) but also functionally (where within a single community different languages are used for different functions).[16] A critical outcome of this social patterning is the complex interrelation set up between language and education.

'There are a number of common misconceptions about bilingualism, including the notion that bilingualism is unusual or a disadvantage.'

It is seldom if ever the case that children come to school speaking the variety of language that is the chosen goal of the school system. Generally, they learn at home a completely different variety, often a different language, or a quite different dialect. This fact serves to set up a language barrier to education.[17] The complexity of situations and the many factors with which they interact makes it difficult to see one's way to a simple policy. There are, I believe, two basic principles, often competing in their application, that must be taken into account in arriving at a policy for language and education that is both responsible and feasible. The first concerns the rights of individual members of a society to equality of educational opportunity; the second concerns the rights of individuals and groups in a multilingual community to maintain, if they so choose, their linguistic varieties.[18] Each of these principles applies, in differing form and at times with conflicting impact, to Maori bilingual education in New Zealand.

Equality of educational opportunity has two parts to it. The first is the right, as far as it is feasible, to be educated in the variety of language that one learned at home, or at a basic minimum where this is not feasible, to be educated in a school that shows full respect for that variety and its strengths and potentials. It was the abrogation of this principle by the New Zealand education system over a hundred years ago that started the process of the destruction of the Maori language. It underlies growing concern for the possible maintenance of immigrant and Pacific Island languages in New Zealand. The second part of the equal opportunity principle is the right to learn in the best way feasible the standard and official languages selected by the society as a whole. This principle calls for effective teaching of English, and now that Maori is officially recognized, adds support to teaching it too.[19] In any case, one would expect to see official languages have priority as at least the major second language in an educational system.

The second major principle recognizes the right of the individual or the group to do whatever is possible to preserve or strengthen varieties of language that have important ethnic, traditional, cultural, or religious values for them. A society that values heterogeneity and multiculturalism will be prepared to provide support for this initiative within the framework of the school curriculum. It is this second principle which is stressed in the recent New Zealand Curriculum Review.

In practice, Bilingual Education may be seen ideally as a result of the application of these two principles in a multilingual setting. As William Mackey's classic essay made clear, there is an infinite range of programmes that might come under the rubric, for the amount (and distribution) of time and effort to each of the two (or more) languages involved depends on the situation and rationales involved.

Many patterns are possible. In traditional monolingual education, other languages are taught a few hours a week, starting usually at secondary school. The goal is seldom more than passive knowledge of the written language. In bilingual communities, the two languages may be used as languages of instruction throughout the system. In the Canadian immersion programme,[20] English-speaking children are offered full-time instruction in French for the first two or three years of school, then moved to bilingual English-French instruction. In many British colonies, initial instruction was all in the vernacular, with English taught from the third year or so and used as medium of instruction by the secondary school. In many Indian schools, instruction is given, successively, in the vernacular, the local language and one of the official national languages.[21] Bilingual maintenance policies are followed with most of the official languages of the Soviet Union.[22] It is important then to be clear that there is no one pattern, and certainly no one correct model. Maori Bilingual Education then is developing its own models, in response to the special needs and situations that exist in the various New Zealand communities.

## Maori Bilingual Education

The present development of Maori Bilingual Education appears to be a result of the conjunction of at least three different but related trends. One of these is connected to the continuing attempts to teach the language in the secondary school, the area of education to which it had been banished by the decision not to use it in primary schools. This traditional Maori language teaching in the secondary schools, partly supported by an infusion of teachers a decade ago, was of limited but important effect in maintaining a minimal level of knowledge of the language and in keeping the language in the curriculum. For most pupils, it leads to knowledge of the language rather than use of it, a pattern that has been remarked upon as the main effect of Irish language revival efforts. The teaching tends to be formal, and examination-oriented. In many cases, the teachers are not themselves fluent in the language they are teaching, so that Maori is spoken only part of the time. The confusion between the academic goal and the ethnic aim is often apparent: sensitive teachers often choose therefore to emphasize the cultural rather than the language aspect of the work.[23]

At Makoura College, for instance, the bilingual programme in 1987 had completely new staff, as the former head of department, M. Hollings, had left to direct the Bilingual Teachers course at Hamilton. The bilingual unit consisted of classes learning Maori 3-4 hours a week. The classes were not conducted in Maori; the teachers had no experience teaching in the language. There was staff support for the goals of the programme, but nothing was yet in place that would deal with the anticipated arrival of pupils from a bilingual programme at Masterton East primary school. At Wellington High School, 28 third-formers and 18 fourth-formers were in a Maori bilingual stream studying Maori a few hours a week and taught other subjects by members of the bilingual team. The Maori language class was taught mainly in Maori; some classroom management in other subjects was in Maori. At Nga Tapawhae College, the Maori teaching appeared quite formal and traditional, with pupils learning to translate sentences to and from the language.[24] At Ngata College, the newly appointed principal, Amster Reddy, set his Maori Studies staff (led by Blackie Pohatu) the task of developing plans for a bilingual curriculum, which seemed to be concerned only with the four hours a week for Maori. A major problem they were facing is the big gap in knowledge of Maori between the children from Hiruharama who were fluent and those from the other contributing schools. It should be stressed that in each of these secondary schools, a strong commitment to Maori cultural education was evident, but the language programme had not yet reached a commensurate level.

The second trend is represented by the early bilingual schools such as the ten-year-old Ruatoki programme[25]. Ruatoki was originally a last-ditch effort to establish a bilingual programme in an area where children at the time were still speaking Maori. Modelled to a certain extent on US bilingual maintenance programmes, it was given minimal resources[26] and continues to have few resources even though now it must deal with a growing number of children who are not native speakers of Maori. Ruatoki was the first of the Maori bilingual schools: the programme started some years before the kohanga reo movement, and is the result of local initiative with central Department of Education support. There are now 150 or so children in the school, 50 of them brought every day from Whakatane. When the programme started ten years ago, the children generally came to Ruatoki school speaking only Maori, but by 1987, many of them (especially those from town) were coming to school speaking English. The programme is conducted totally in Maori up to Standard 2, and thereafter is bilingual. There has been a great deal of development of Maori curricular material, and the infant teacher, Mrs Williams, is the pioneer in Maori bilingual teaching. There is a strong school committee chaired by Tuhitaare Nohotuma: one of its regular problems is dealing with departmental staffing policies which tend to post non-speakers of Maori to teach at the school.

> 'The bilingual schools and units are an attempt to cope with strong and growing community pressure for language revitalization.'

The third trend, and the one that is starting to have a major effect on the language situation, is the growing number of children coming to the primary schools (and soon to come to intermediate and secondary schools) who have gained various degrees of competence in the Maori language while they were in kohanga reo programmes. Joined to the effects of the bilingual schools like Ruatoki, this trend will soon start to influence and even swamp the secondary school programmes.

While there are great individual local differences, the general pattern of this newest trend goes something like this: The parents from one or more successful kohanga reo programmes, pleased that their children are learning Maori and determined that the learning be continued[27], make approaches to a nearby primary school. These bilingual children and their enthusiastic parents are the first resource needed to establish a bilingual programme. The second is provided by the local school: a willing principal, a not-unwilling (or even better, a supportive) school committee, and some available space.[28] At this point, the key question becomes staffing. In the schools that I visited in 1987, a teacher ready and willing to teach in Maori[29] had been found in the school or had infiltrated through the appointment system.[30] In addition, with the cooperation of the District Senior Inspector and the encouragement of various levels of the educational system, the appointment of a fluent Maori-speaking kaiarahi reo (language assistant) made it possible to set up the first minimal teaching team.

Once the team was in place, the real work began, as the associate teacher (usually with some previous knowledge of Maori but not necessarily fluency) and the kaiarahi reo started to explore the nature of a Maori bilingual curriculum. Working with minimal curricular guidance[31] and resources, they were developing their own curriculum model and materials and their own method of teaching. In most schools I visited, the team had arrived at a decision to teach everything (including reading and arithmetic) in and through Maori: the approach was generally labelled 'immersion', but the details of implementation varied widely.

Once the first Maori bilingual unit in a school is underway, the pressure of new children coming to the school from nearby kohanga reos and the availability of additional qualified teachers and free space determines how it is continued. Many units I saw have adopted a whanau or family system of organization. The children stay in such a unit for three years or more, so that each unit contains a range of pupils from new entrants to standard 2 or higher. This arrangement allows for greater flexibility in organization, and those who use it are happy with its other educational advantages.

At some time,[32] English is introduced into the curriculum and what has been an initial early immersion programme becomes a maintenance bilingual programme.[33] The effect of the programmes I saw was to produce children who have varying degrees of competence in both Maori and English, but who expect (and will be expected by their parents) to continue to learn in both languages.

I visited a number of schools with such programmes: **Pencarrow Primary School** – The children from the two kohanga reo programmes in the Wainuiomata area go on to Pencarrow Primary School, where, in response to community pressure, a full immersion programme was started. There were 15-20 children in the class, all volunteers: only children who had had kohanga reo experience were accepted. The teacher in charge of the class was an older Maori woman with long teaching experience and a deep commitment to the language, but until this year, all her teaching had been in English. For her, too, then, this was a first experience of immersion teaching. She was assisted by a kaiarahi reo, a woman chosen as a language assistant on the basis of her fluency in Maori. The two were supported by a third adult, a 'nanny', who was in fact an older relative of the teacher. All three adults and the children engaged in free relaxed conversation in Maori. The classroom was filled with material in Maori prepared by teacher and pupils.[14]

**Waiwhetu Primary School** – One of the first kohanga reos was established in Waiwhetu, so the immersion programme was already in its second year. The children ranged from new entrants to Standard 2. While most of the teaching was in Maori, arithmetic was taught in an English pull-out programme, and Standard 2 children were taught reading in English. There was increasing demand for extending the programme, but plans were threatened by staff cuts mandated because of falling enrolments in the school as a whole.

**Masterton East (Rawhiti) Primary School** – Two strong kohanga reo programmes[15] were feeding children to this school, where about 40 children were being taught in an immersion programme. The class had two qualified teachers, neither of whom was fluent in Maori before they started teaching in the language; they were assisted by kaiarahi reo. As the teachers became more confident in their language use, they switched the initial reading teaching from English to Maori, and were happy with the results. There was a shortage of curricular material, and the teachers were preparing their own on the model of ESL books. They had also developed some tests of their own. Here too, plans for growth were complicated by falling enrolments. The other major question being discussed was what will happen to the children in the bilingual programme when they go to intermediate school.

**Natone Park School** – Because children were coming to this school (with its supposedly Australian name) with increasing fluency in Maori, the STJC (infant mistress) and a kaiarahi reo were starting a bilingual programme, but the associate teacher still lacked fluency in Maori so the teaching was mainly in English. They hoped to begin an immersion curriculum in the following year or two. The area is multitribal. The school lacks resources, and feels neglected.

**Wilford Primary School** – On my visit to this school, I had may first taste of the protocol of a formal Maori 'powhiri' or welcome: I was greeted by the school Maori club (a hundred or more children) with waiata [traditional chants] and hakas [action songs], before being escorted by some children to the bilingual class. Two European teachers and a kaiarahi reo were operating a whanau type[16] bilingual class for 65 or so children. One room was kept for Maori only: there I saw the kaiarahi reo teaching reading, assisted by her two unemployed teenage sons who were sitting around reading to or with the children. In the other rooms, classroom management and some other activities were in Maori; children were permitted to use English in reply. The programme was being fed by five kohanga reo programmes. The school also had a Samoan programme for one of its classes a couple of hours once a week.

**Richmond Road Primary School** – This is an innovative school with a schoolwide multilevel whanau system and strong emphasis on teacher developed curriculum. The programme is one that has already attracted international attention; the principal, Jim Laughton, is a charismatic leader with a compelling vision of what elementary schooling can accomplish. While Maoris make up only a small fraction of the school roll (the large majority of pupils are Pacific Islanders), a Maori bilingual unit has been set up[17] which has four teachers (two of them Maori speakers) and a kaiarahi reo for about 75 children, from new entrants to Standard 4. The children learn in Maori about half the day. Literacy is taught in English; the emphasis is on oral Maori. Each child's progress in reading and arithmetic is closely monitored. There is also a Samoan bilingual unit.

**Clydemore Primary School** – The bilingual unit was started four years ago, and in 1987 there were 100 or more children in bilingual classes, which go up to Standard 3. (If a suitable intermediate school programme cannot be found, there is thought of keeping the children at the school.) Most of the teachers have learned Maori as a second language, and they were working with the help of the parents. The classes I saw were conducted in Maori, with the children code-switching or using either language. The school council has four ethnic committees which meet once a month. The Maori committee discussed (and resolved satisfactorily in the meantime.) the issue of dialect diversity: there was some worry because the teachers were not speakers of the local dialect.[18] The Standard 2 children were reading material in Maori written for secondary schools.

**Rakaumanga Primary School** – The school at Rakaumanga is developing into a full primary by adding the intermediate levels. The Maori bilingual programme in 1987 was immersion in Maori up to Standard 1, with plans to extend to higher levels. The class I observed was using Maori easily and comfortably.

**Hiruharama Primary School** – It was a little surprising and quite impressive to find the greeting speeches given here by Alex Hope, a police sergeant and chairman of the school committee. The school is a small one, but the Principal (Lil Waru) and her

Kohanga Reo. Many New Zealand children attend pre-schools, like the one pictured here, before beginning free and compulsory education provided between the ages of six and 15. This pre-school is different in that it is called a *Kohanga reo* (language nest) where the Maori language is taught and an appreciation of Maori culture and values is developed. *(Picture courtesy of the New Zealand High Commission, Canberra)*

teachers were offering a strong immersion programme up to Standard 1 and a bilingual programme after that. Considerable effort had obviously gone into resource development. There is good community backing for the programme: the children go on to secondary school with a strong basis in Maori.

**Waikiriki Primary School** – In this large Gisborne suburban school, the principal Don Sinclair had encouraged the development of a Maori immersion unit (through J2) with 25 children. Hannah McFarland, the Maori associate teacher was being supported by Toti Tuhaka, the kaiarahi reo, and the programme was fed by a strong kohanga reo. Mrs McFarland would like to continue the immersion programme up to Standard 2. There had been a good deal of curriculum development. A second junior room had children in it who did not go to a kohanga reo, they were being taught some Maori.

These elementary schools I saw, and others like them, were starting to produce children who are fluent in Maori and English and who have been taught in both languages. The result of this will in the next few years start to affect intermediate and secondary schools, producing pressures that will need to be met in the curriculum[39] and in providing teachers.[40] This fact was dramatically illustrated to the Waitangi Tribunal. Pou Temara, an experienced teacher of Maori, demonstrated the difficulty that a fifth-form student (one who, he predicted, would get a good grade in the Maori School Certificate examination) had in describing orally a picture in Maori, and compared this with the fluency and volubility in Maori of a five-year old from a kohanga reo.[41] When this five-year-old starts secondary school in seven or eight years, his level of knowledge of Maori and fluency in it will be far ahead of the children completing secondary school now: the enormity of the challenge is obvious.

And there will almost inevitably be a second source of pressure facing the educational system. In the Canadian French immersion programmes, once

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the success of the early (first grade) programmes became clear, there was intense parental pressure that called for the establishment of middle (seventh grade) and late (eleventh grade) total immersion programmes.[42] The greater efficiency of certain types of language learning with older children will mean that such middle and late immersion programmes, provided they are properly undertaken, will be faster than the early immersion.[43]

To sum up, the bilingual schools and units are an attempt to cope with strong and growing community pressure for language revitalization. The form of the programme generally starts with a teacher-developed immersion curriculum, intended to be succeeded by an as-yet also undefined bilingual maintenance curriculum. With minimal resources, and working often against established administrative patterns, the teachers are starting to build a blueprint, pioneering their way into a new area.

## Creating Maori Space

I mentioned the formal powhiri or welcome at Wilford School, but it was on the trip to the Waikato and East Coast that I really started to learn protocol.[44] My escort (a Maori education adviser) had told me that we would be met by some of his colleagues who would look after us, and while we were sitting talking to the newly appointed Maori principal and his Maori school committee chairman at Rakaumunga School, four women (education advisers and itinerant teachers of Maori) arrived to fill an important role in the ceremony.[45]

The greeting ceremony in the Waikato and East Coast generally followed the same pattern. Our party would wait, in a staff-room or principal's office or at the school gate, for a signal that it was time to enter. Preceded by one of the women with us, we would then walk in procession towards the classroom or building where the greeting was to take place. A local woman (a teacher or a pupil), would then appear and sing the karanga, to which our escort would reply. We would enter the room and sit down on a row of chairs. Facing us would be the school, or the class, with at least two men (teachers or school committee members) on their right. The powhiri started with a speech in Maori from the senior (in Maori terms) local person – sometimes the school principal or deputy principal, or school board chairman.[46] At the end of the speech (which lasted about five minutes), the school would stand and sing a waiata. After a second speech of welcome and waiata, the male[47] education adviser escorting me would give the first reply, after which the visiting group would stand and sing its waiata. I gave the second reply, starting my speech (at the suggestion of my escort) in Hebrew and then going on to explain (in English) something about Hebrew language revival. After a waiata, we would hand over an envelope containing money as a substitute for the offering of food that is a traditional part of the visitor's role. The powhiri would conclude with the visiting party moving along a row of the local group (the adults and a few of the children) in order to shake hands and press noses.

It took me a while to grasp the significance of these formal Maori receptions that preceded most of my visits. In Wilford, it had seemed like a rather charming display of Maori culture, but on the Waikato and East Coast trip I came to appreciate that it served a number of important functions. In part, of course, there was the traditional Maori concern for showing respect to a visitor. One important aspect of this was the reciprocal effect. The more impressive the ceremony, the more important the visitor, but the more important the visitor, the more important the place he has chosen to visit. The showing of respect to an international expert in bilingual education[48] showed in its turn the importance ascribed by the Department of Education to the particular programmes I was taken to visit. The ceremonial then had a positive value for the local community, and served to proclaim the importance of the bilingual programme.

The second interesting function performed by the traditional ceremony was its definition and underlining of the Maoriness of the bilingual programmes I visited. The powhiri is the ceremony performed when guests come to a marae-atea, the physical space designated by a Maori group for traditional formal activities. One might consider the analogy of the sign found in many American schools that says 'Visitors must report to the Principal's Office.' The purpose of the sign is to make clear that access to the school is through the administrative bureaucracy; like the special badges given to visitors to a building with special security, they determine the degree of access allowed. These traditional Maori ceremonies made clear that access to the bilingual programme is under traditional Maori community control: the decision to admit a visitor is made not in an administrative but in a traditional way: visitors report not to the principal but to the local Maori community, and are clearly labelled as visitors. This was brought home to me by the remark of one European school principal, as I was leaving after a morning spent in his school's bilingual programme, that he has a policy of requiring visitors to spend at least three days and look at the school as a whole; I interpreted this as an explanation of how my formal welcome by the whanau had replaced his regulation.

The establishment of the Maori bilingual programmes as Maori space was also emphasized by the physical surroundings: the classrooms were decorated with Maori art, and a number had traditional carvings in them as well. Thus, the bilingual programmes are establishing physical and social space for the process of linguistic and cultural revival. The schools I visited were state schools, but they had found ways, in the use of Maori as sole language of instruction and in other symbolic ways, to declare Maori space, a move towards the possible establishment of Kaupapa Maori schools, schools with a complete Maori philosophy.[49]

## Local and Tribal Concerns

Stan Steiner has pointed out that the notion of the American Indian was essentially a European invention: the various Native American peoples, with their many different languages, cultures, and histories, came to form a distinct unit only in the eyes of the white colonists. The revival of Native American ethnic identity in recent years has involved also the rediscovery of tribal differences: Pan-Indianism is at best seen as a temporary political alliance. There are signs of similar local and tribal concerns in the Maori language revitalization process. I referred above to concern expressed over dialect differences. These are far from trivial matters, but reflect an underlying issue of some major importance.[50]

The work of the Waitangi Tribunal in setting out to redress grievances over land confiscations dating back to 1840 has been focussing attention on the importance of the tribal or iwi affiliation that establishes the beneficiaries of such claims. Tribal identity thus has a major economic relevance, and this perhaps explains why the Maori cultural renaissance is tending to stress this feature rather than being satisfied with some generalized notions of the Maori people as a whole. The local nature of the bilingual programmes, and their concern for local control, illustrates this fact. This factor is one that will add richness to the process, but at the same time produce political and practical problems such as agreement on the use of dialects in the bilingual programmes, an issue that will show up in teacher appointments[51] and in book publication.

## Revival and Revitalization

There have been a good number of language revival efforts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, associated usually with nationalist movements for which they proclaim both ethnic individuality (we are a separate people because we have our own language) and ethnic past (our language associates us with the Great Tradition of our past as a people). There have been efforts to revive a number of Celtic languages, the Irish, Welsh and Breton cases probably being the most well known. Another less well-known but now increasingly well-documented case is that of Frisian. In most of these cases, the main thrust of activity has been revival, by which I mean an effort to re-establish both the number of speakers (usually by teaching in the schools) and the number of public and official functions for which the language is used. An important side effect of this increased functional use is the need for language modernization; similarly, a necessary side effect of the school teaching is the need for language standardization. Another goal of these efforts is revitalization, the restoration of the vitality of the language by assuring a future supply of native speakers.

One of the most effective cases of language revival and revitalization in modern times is that of Hebrew. By the nineteenth century, there had not been native speakers of Hebrew for some seventeen hundred years, and while the language was widely known and used, there were severe restrictions on the domains of use. The important effect of the Hebrew revival movement at the turn of the present century was both to call for wider use in all language functions, and to encourage a generation of parents and prospective parents who would speak the language to their children. Since the children graduating from the Hebrew language schools in the 1890's spoke Hebrew better than they spoke their parents' languages, it was natural that when they married they would speak Hebrew with each other and with their children. Within twenty or thirty years, this was happening, so that children born in the late 1920's were likely to be native speakers of Hebrew. The evidence of the Hebrew case showed a combination of factors: the two critical features seem to be the use of Hebrew as language of instruction in the schools and kindergartens, and the development of strong community-wide ideological support for Hebrew language use.[52]

This example suggests that the next few years will be critical for Maori. Continued support by parents and Government for the kohanga reo movement will keep up pressure on the schools. Intelligent concentration of resources in the educational system[53] on building strong groups of Maori speakers in the primary school, and developing their linguistic competence in the secondary school, will produce a new generation of fluent Maori speakers who will be capable, should they so choose, of being the parents and teachers of the new native speakers. Maori then shows good prospects for revitalization. ►

## Notes

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**2.** Both the 1867 Native Schools Act and the 1887 Education Act provided for Maori children to be taught in English, and so effectively discouraged Maori (Kaa 1987 56). As Inspector of Maori Schools, James H. Pope seems to have initially encouraged the teaching of English through Maori. The 1880 Code provided for its use in the junior classes for this purpose. By 1903, however, Pope was describing the use of Maori as an anachronism. For details, see Barrington and Beaglehole (1974).

**3.** N. Benton (ms) summarizes the situation revealed by the NZCER sociolinguistic surveys and discusses some of the causes.

**4.** Hirsh (1987) gives a good picture of the increasing interest in bilingualism and the maintenance of community languages that provides a general background to the Maori case.

**5.** See Kaa (1987).

**6.** See for instance Te Iwi Kuaite (1987) and M.T. and D. Kerslake (1987).

**7.** See Benton (1985).

**8.** See Kerr (1987).

**9.** A legal body established by Act of Parliament to look into the implementation of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi in which the Maori Chiefs of New Zealand ceded sovereignty to the Crown.

**10.** See Benton (1987).

**11.** The effect of the act is to make it legal to use Maori in giving evidence in a court of law.

**12.** See for example the 1987 Report of the Committee to Review the Curriculum in Schools published by the Department of Education.

**13.** Monolingual communities are in fact rare.

**14.** Dodson (1985) argues that all bilinguals have a preferred and a second language. Scholars generally accept that the balanced bilingual is rare.

**15.** One thinks in particular of the classic study of a New Jersey community, Bilingualism in the Barrio.

**16.** A classic case is called diglossia, where one language is used for private and daily functions and another variety of that language is used for public and formal functions.

**17.** For further discussion, see B. Spolsky (1987).

**18.** These principles, it can reasonably said, are minimalist. A good case can be made (see Phillipson and Skutnabb Kangas) for equality of educational outcome rather than opportunity, and for a state obligation both to allow and pay for minority language maintenance efforts.

**19.** Under this official language principle, one might also want to argue for the right of non-Maoris to expect effective Maori language programmes to be available to them.

**20.** See Lambert and Tucker (1972) and Genesee (1987).

**21.** See Pattanayak (1981).

**22.** See Guboglo (1986).

**23.** Royal (1987) describes an attempt to develop a high school bilingual programme.

**24.** For details of other aspects of the school's well-developed multicultural program, see Gluckman (1987).

**25.** And others which preceded the kohanga reo movement.

**26.** I suspect that a comparison of the resources made available to Ruatoki with those available to development in US bilingual programmes would be rather striking.

**27.** I heard parents speak of keeping their children in a kohanga reo and refusing to let them go on to primary school until a suitable programme was promised; another response to the slowness of modification of regular school programmes has been a move to set up seperate Maori independent schools, such as the Hoani Waititi Marae School.

**28.** Paradoxically, because many of these programmes develop in schools with diminishing rolls, the space is often the easiest resource to find.

**29.** Not necessarily fully ready, for a number of the teachers I saw were teaching in Maori for the first time, and recognized that they needed to improve their language skills.

**30.** Staff appointments in schools are made by three person committees, one an administrator from the Regional Education Board, one a school inspector, and the third a representative of the NZEI (teachers organization). Essentially, the appointments are professional, with minimal sensitivity to special local needs.

**31.** The itinerant Maori language teachers and advisers who try to help them are generally kept busy with the demands of other schools which are attempting to implement taha Maori (a Maori dimension) throughout the New Zealand school system.

**32.** The principles by which a decision will be made on the correct time are clearly complex and deserving of full discussion and empirical study.

**33.** These clear terms should not be allowed to disguise the complex variation that is hidden beneath them. There has as yet been no careful consideration of what an ideal Maori bilingual programme will involve.

**34.** Some of these comments apply to many of the sites. I was struck generally by the comfortable atmosphere, with teachers and pupils sitting together on the mats, and the relaxed warm conversational teaching; the classes generally were bright and lived in, with drawing and posters all over, and Maori the only or dominant language of signs. To save time and space in this report, I will not repeat this but comment on only new things I observed as I went around.

**35.** I visited one that meets in a church owned building in another area of Masterton. There are 20 children in the kohanga reo and a waiting list of the same size. Priority is given to children whose parents say they will send them on to the bilingual programme.

**36.** The whanau is the 'family', a significant kinship unit in the organization of Maori social life. According to Pere (1982), it usually consisted of at least one tipuna with three or four generations of direct descendants and their spouses. In traditional usage, a whanau was an economic unit, a self sufficient group with its own support system. Several whanau would be grouped together into a hapu, the next level of tribal organization. In New Zealand educational usage, the term whanau is used for a multilevel approach where children remain together for a number of years rather than being passed on each year to a new teacher.

**37.** The proposal to start with a Maori bilingual unit came from the Samoan school committee chairman, showing the traditional Polynesian respect for tangata whenua, the people of the land.

**38.** The discussion was concluded, I was told, by an old woman who said, 'Let the school teach them Maori; we'll correct their dialect at home.'

**39.** It has been observed that children in Standard 2 are already close to or above the level of linguistic competence presently considered a goal in the fifth form.

**40.** I visited a secondary school where two of the Maori language teachers had virtually no language skills and the department head was not able to teach in the language.

**41.** Waitangi Tribunal findings, pages 42-3.

**42.** One secondary school is already concerned about how to integrate the children from a bilingual school with children from other schools.

**43.** The Canadian middle immersion programmes are in Grade 7 and last one full year during which time almost all the teaching is done in French.

**44**. The Maori greeting ceremony is analysed in some detail by Salmond (1974). Some of the power and importance of the powhiri can be learned from a recent novel by Witi Ihimaera (1986) in which a greeting ceremony is the central incident.

**45**. Pere (1982 26 7) points out that No formal occasion or other ceremony can begin without the fervent karanga (call, summon and statement of welcome) of the women. Neither will any self-respecting man of Tuhoe Potiki feel comfortable about proceeding on to the marae area without the women to respond as the first voice to such important proceedings. In all my visits to schools in the Waikato and East Coast, I was accompanied by one or more women (education advisers or itinerant teachers of Maori) who could respond to the karanga and take part in the waiata (songs) that punctuated the greeting ceremony.

**46**. As I did not visit any schools in the Tuhoe area (see Pere 1982) all the speeches at these formal greeting ceremonies were given by men. Thus, in a school where the principal and all the teachers were woman, the speeches were given by school committee members.

**47**. R Pere points out that there are tribes where women can speak on the marae, but this was not the case in the areas I visited.

**48**. I believe that my escort stressed this in his speeches.

**49**. As far as I know, only the private Hoani Waititi Marae School in Auckland fits this term at the moment, but other such private schools are proposed. There has also been an interesting development in the formation of a tertiary level institution, Te Wananga o Raukawa, which offers an undergraduate Bachelor of Maori and Administration course as well as intensive Maori language instruction (one week immersion courses) for adults.

**50** I am grateful to Graeme Kennedy (personal communication) for drawing my attention to this point.

**51**. In a number of cases, the education authority has found it hard to understand the desire of the school to appoint to a teaching post in a bilingual programme not just a speaker of Maori but a speaker of the local dialect, who is also thus a member of the local tribe.

**52**. It must also be pointed out that there continued to be some strong opposition to the revived use of Hebrew. One early argument was that it did not have the power of modern languages like German, French and English for science and commerce. The argument was overcome, but it is to be noted that Israeli children are expected to learn a second language. The second argument came from the anti-Zionist religious groups who argued that Hebrew should be kept as a Holy Tongue. While Modern Hebrew is still not taught in their schools, it is spoken generally by their children.

**53**. R Benton (ms) discusses administrative and organizational issues related to the developing bilingual programmes. One difficult problem being faced by the educational system is whether to move resources from the school wide Taha Maori programme and target them to specific language revival programmes for Maori children.

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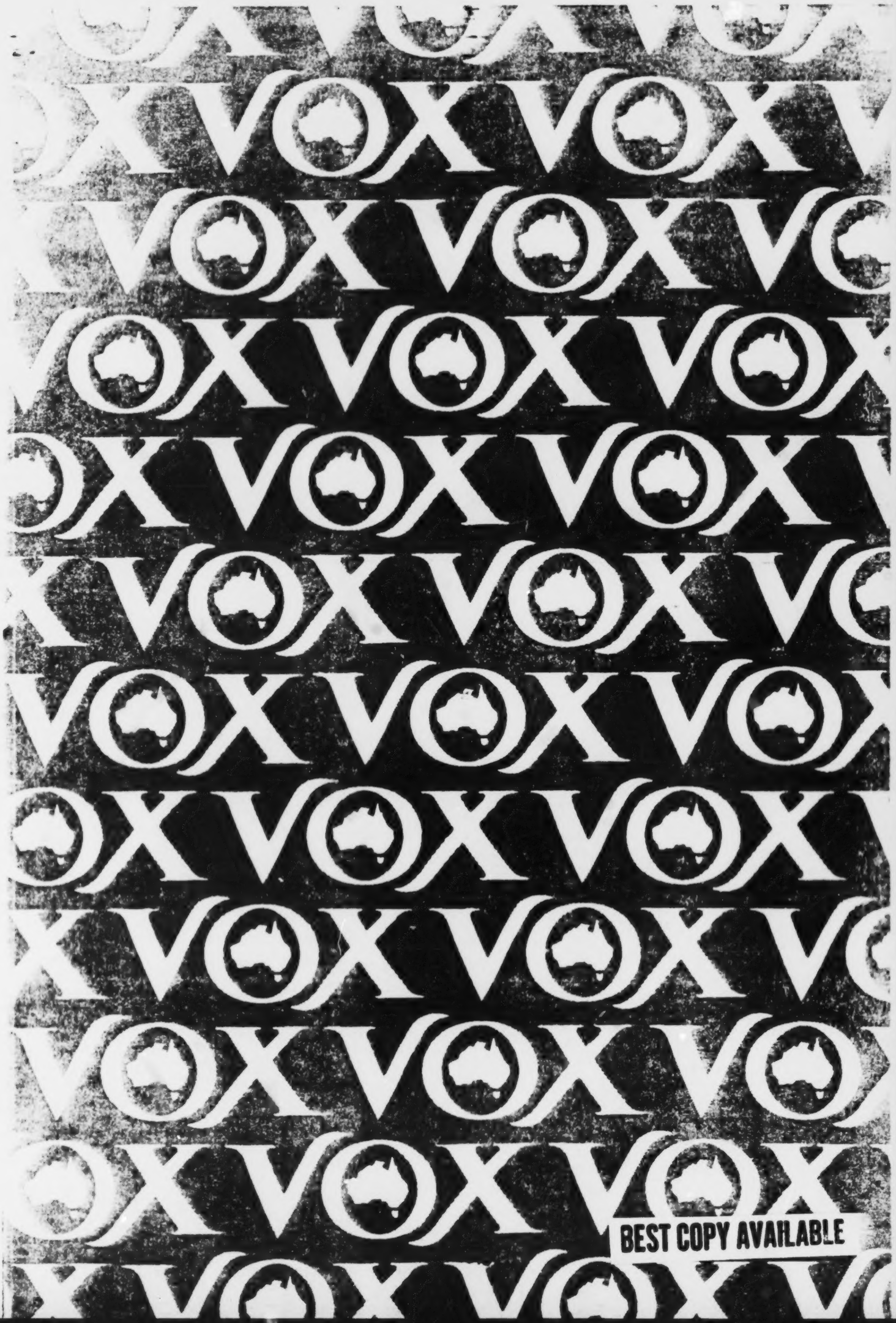
*Professor Bernard Spolsky is New Zealand born. He has had a long and distinguished career in the USA and many other countries, evaluating bilingual education and language. He has written some of the seminal works in these disciplines. He lives and works in Israel where he is a specialist in Hebrew language but retains ongoing links with New Zealand.*



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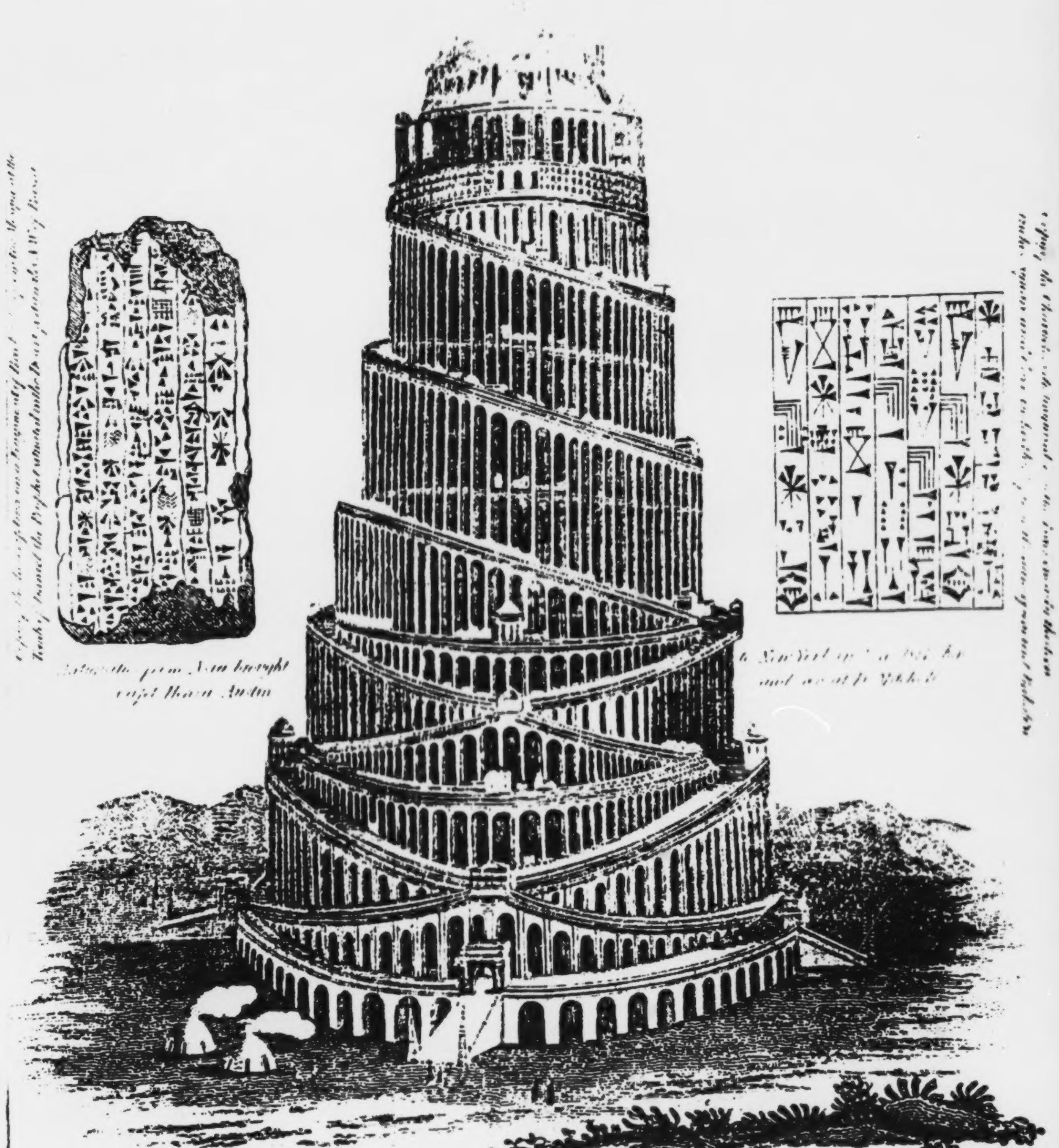
THE JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON LANGUAGES AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

**AACLAME** **ISSUE NO 5 ■ 1991**

# VOX



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VOX is the journal of the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education. It is a medium for the exchange of information on languages policy and multicultural education issues, and in particular, the National Policy on Languages. Two issues are published each year.

This issue is presented in two sections. The first section contains information about AACLAME, its activities, the implementation of the National Policy on Languages and recent developments in languages policy in Australia and overseas. The second section consists of contributed articles relating to different aspects of languages policy.

Articles, with photographs or other illustrations where possible, are invited for consideration for future issues. Articles should be approximately 3000 words, and follow the conventions of this issue. All correspondence should be addressed to the:

Publications Manager
AACLAME Secretariat
Department of Employment, Education and Training
GPO Box 9880 Canberra ACT 2601 Australia

COVER

The cover illustration of the Tower of Babel is a rendering from a 19th century engraving belonging to the Granger collection, New York.

The Tower of Babel is said to have been built in the land of Shinar (Babylonia) some time after the Deluge. According to the story in Genesis 11 1–9, the Babylonians wanted to build a city and a tower whose top would reach to heaven. Their project angered Jehova and as a punishment for their presumption he confused their languages so that they no longer understood one another and scattered them over the face of the earth. The story appears to be an attempt to explain the existence of diverse human languages and races.

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**Department of Employment, Education and Training**

# From The Chair

This issue of *Vox* comes after the highly successful conference 'Language is Good Business – the Role of Languages in Australia's Economic Future' and the equally successful OECD Australian Conference on 'Education and Cultural and Linguistic Pluralism', an AACLAME initiative, organised with the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation. This international conference was held in March 1991 at the Sydney Convention Centre. As part of the Conference the Australian case studies were released. They are published by the Falmer Press. *Vox* 5 coincides with the release by the Federal Government of a Green Paper on the National Policy on Languages, to be called the Australian Literacy and Language Policy. The question of appropriate and adequate planning for language education is as vital as ever.

Another major event, relevant to this issue of *Vox* is the formal opening by the Prime Minister, on 21 November 1990 at the National Gallery of Victoria, of the National Languages Institute of Australia.

In addition to major activities such as these, the regular disbursement of grants to schools, higher education institutions and other bodies under the various programs of the National Policy on Languages continues.

This fifth issue of *Vox* contains articles of general interest in the first section, as well as fourteen articles of a more specialised nature in the second section. These deal with our immediate region of the world: Crowley and Mangubhai on Melanesia and the South Pacific respectively; Spolsky on Samoan in New Zealand; and Lim on the Singapore dilemma. On language issues further afield: Yans describes new approaches to English teaching in Japan; Kloprogge discusses the integration and achievements of ethnic minority pupils in the Netherlands; Povey surveys the remarkably complex issues surrounding language planning in Africa, and Bola analyses world trends and issues in adult literacy. This is particularly timely as we close International Literacy Year.

On the home front we have articles dealing with languages other than English in Australia and also on the different forms of Australian English: Berthold reports on student opinions on French language immersion in Queensland; Wiseman writes about an interesting German program in South Australia; Gatt-Rutter and Cavallaro examine the prospects for minority immigrant languages; Campbell estimates Sydney's language resources; Hirsch considers reading and thought in foreign language classrooms; and two forms of our English are dealt with by Eades, on Aboriginal English, and by Delbridge, who talks about Australian English more generally.

The state featured in this issue is Queensland.

Joseph LoBianco

Joseph Lo Bianco

# THE NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON LITERACY EDUCATION FOR LIMITED-ENGLISH-PROFICIENT (LEP) ADULTS AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

The National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education For Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) Adults and Out-of-School Youth

The first National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education (NCLE) has been established as an Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in the USA. The Clearinghouse provides information, materials and technical assistance on literacy education for limited-English-proficient (LEP) adults and out-of-school youth. NCLE also links the diverse public and private institutions, agencies and community groups concerned with literacy issues for the limited-English-proficient population.

As an Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse, ERIC/NCLE collects, analyses, abstracts, indexes and enters documents on literacy education into the ERIC database. These include research reports, instructional materials, program descriptions and evaluations, teacher/tutor training guides and assessment materials.

To the extent possible, ERIC/NCLE also provides practical technical assistance in areas such as program design, curriculum development, materials adaptation, diagnosis and assessment and training of trainers of volunteer tutors and others who deliver literacy services.

One of the first-year products of the new Clearinghouse will be a Directory of Literacy Programs in the United States serving LEP adults and out-of-school youth. Other new publications will address:

Approaches to teaching literacy to LEP adults

Literacy programs for LEP out-of-school youth

Vocational literacy programs for LEP adults and out-of-school youth

Workplace literacy for LEP adults

Reaching and keeping students in adult literacy programs

Selecting and adapting materials for use in LEP adult literacy programs

Cultural considerations in teaching literacy to LEP adults

Training literacy volunteers and tutors

The role of first language literacy in the acquisition of second language literacy

For more information, or to submit materials to be considered for inclusion in the ERIC database, write or call NCLE at the address or telephone number below.

National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education
Centre for Applied Linguistics
1118 22nd Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

Tel: (202) 429-9292 or (202) 429-9551
Fax: (202) 659-5641 or (202) 429-9766

JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall, Director
Jeannie Rennie, Associate Director
Joy Peyton, Publications Coordinator
David Spener, Acquisitions Coordinator
Karen Willetts, User Services Coordinator

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# NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

The US Department of Education through the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs has selected The George Washington University in a joint effort with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) to operate the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE). The NCBE scope of work contains a number of activities including:

Coordinating with other information centers

Developing and implementing an Outreach Program

Acquiring information resources

Maintaining a resource collection

Developing and managing computerised databases

Providing computerised information services

Providing reference and referral services

Producing and disseminating information products; and

Conducting needs assessment activities

The NCBE shares its headquarters with the National Clearinghouse for Literacy Education.

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education

1118 22nd Street NW

Washington, DC 20037

Tel: (02) 467 – 0867

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Joel Gomez, Director

Minerva Gorena, Associate Director

Donna Christian, Associate Director

# IMMIGRANTS IN THE BUSH

## A RESOURCE KIT FOR UPPER PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

*Immigrants in the Bush* presents four case studies on life in rural northern New South Wales since the turn of the century. The focus is on people describing their own experiences and, in particular, on people from non-English-speaking backgrounds talking about why they or their families moved to a country area and what it has been like living there. The stories reveal much about the migrant experience and about rural life in New South Wales.

The stories are told through oral histories, photographs, family trees, maps and illustrated diagrams. Each case study includes notes, resources and vocabulary in the languages used by the interviewees. The case studies are A4 size including A4 size photographs and are spiral bound for easy use in the classroom.

Compiled by Janis Wilton with the assistance of Helen Andreoni and Myra Dunn, all from the University of New England, Immigrants in the Bush introduces students to new perspectives on living in rural Australia. Through oral histories, photographs, sketches, maps, illustrated diagrams and family trees, students learn how country areas have benefitted from the presence of Australians from a variety of cultural backgrounds. They also gain insights into how country stores have changed, why people live in rural areas, the daily routines of country town life, the rigours and pleasures of farming, the unexpected variety of lifestyles evident in rural areas and much more.

The kit consists of four case studies each focusing on Australians from a different cultural background and on different aspects of rural life. The case studies are:

- Hong Yuen: A Country Store and its People
- The story of a Chinese-Australian, his descendants and their family business in Inverell.
- Hawking to Haberdashery
- The experiences of some early Lebanese settlers and their children in and around Glen Innes.
- Cafes and Cafe Owners
- The lives and livelihoods of five Greek-Australians who worked different times in country cafes.
- The Pleper Letters: Tenterfield in the 1950s
- The story of a German couple who came to Tenterfield in the 1950s as told through letters written during their first five years in Australia.

Each case study includes notes, resources and vocabulary in the languages used by the interviewees. The books are A4 size including A4 size photographs, have fold out diagrams and family trees and are spiral bound for easy use in the classroom.

The case studies are accompanied by a Teacher's Handbook written by Myra Dunn which suggests strategies and activities for use in the classroom and illustrates how the resources can be used across the curriculum as well as within subject areas. There are also two posters and a sound recording.

*Immigrants in the Bush* was funded by the NSW Department of Education's Multicultural Education Coordinating Committee (MECC).

The kit costs $60 (plus P & P) and is available from the University of New England Publishing Unit, University of New England, Armidale 2351.

For further information contact Janis Wilton (067) 734307/728079 or Helen Andreoni (067) 734326.

# AUSTRALIAN BICENTENNIAL MULTICULTURAL FOUNDATION

The Australian Bicentennial Authority gave support to a proposal to establish the Australian Bicentennial Multicultural Foundation. The idea was first proposed by the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia at a National Conference in 1981.

In 1986 the Federation and the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs jointly convened a Working Party which consulted widely concerning the objects and direction for the Foundation.

In June 1987 the Authority invested $3 million in the Australian Bicentennial Multicultural Foundation Trust Account. In September 1988 the funds were transferred to the Foundation after it was legally incorporated as an independent organisation.

Current Status: the Foundation is incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee under the Companies (Victoria) Code and registered as a body corporate in all States and Territories.

The aims and objectives of the Foundation are:

- to cultivate in all Australians a strong commitment to Australia as one people drawn from many cultures and by so doing to advance its social and economic well-being;
- to promote an awareness among the people of Australia of the diversity of cultures within Australia and the contribution of people from all cultures to Australia's development; and
- to spread tolerance and understanding between all cultural groups through any appropriate means.

The Foundation will achieve its aims:

- by adopting an issue of national significance for support on an annual basis; and
- by initiating projects and programs in any worthwhile field or activity.

# THE AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL YOUTH EXCHANGE

The Australian Multicultural Youth Exchange is a project of the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW which gives Australians an opportunity to benefit from our rich cultural diversity.

The purpose of the Multicultural Youth Exchange program is to increase the understanding of people, cultures and diversity within Australia, by promoting multiculturalism via a youth exchange. The Australia Multicultural Youth Exchange, through a national exchange program offers young Australians the chance to share other cultures through interpersonal contact in homes, schools, workplaces and communities where host families reside around Australia.

The Ethnic Communities Council of NSW has been funded to the amount of $4,000 by the Australian Bicentennial Multicultural Foundation to undertake a feasibility study into the Multicultural Youth Exchange Project, prior to piloting the program.

# AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

## THE AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGE CERTIFICATES

During 1990, the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) coordinated, on behalf of the Australian Bicentennial Multicultural Foundation, a project to develop proficiency certificates in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Modern Greek. The purpose of the Australian Language Certificates is to acknowledge individual success in learning a new language and to enhance the status of language learning in schools.

Ms Susan Zammit, a Senior Research Officer at ACER, coordinated the project together with Dr Geoff Masters, Assistant Director (Measurement). ACER has considerable experience in managing large scale projects like this. In 1990, ACER undertook the full range of tasks, from selecting schools to take part in the pilot study to printing and distributing the certificates to be awarded.

Barry McGaw, Director

## THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE'S ROLE IN THE NEW AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGE CERTIFICATES

The University of Melbourne is pleased to be able to play a major role in the development of the new Australian Language Certificates.

For each of the six languages represented in the first stage of the project in 1990 (Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Modern Greek), the University is providing the Chair of the relevant Language Panel. For Chinese, Italian and Japanese, the Chair is a member of the University's Institute of Education. The Faculty of Arts is providing the Chairs for the panels in French, German and Modern Greek. The task of each Chair is to appoint other members of the panel from within the teaching profession, ensuring a wide representation from around Australia, and to coordinate the work of the panel in developing test materials for the relevant languages.

The drafting of specifications for the two components of the test (listening skills and reading skills) involves collaboration between the University's new Language Testing Centre of the National Languages Institute of Australia and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

The University welcomes this valuable opportunity to encourage the learning of foreign and second languages in schools, at a time when the national need for proficiency in languages other than English is so great. We look forward to a successful collaboration with ACER and the Bicentennial Multicultural Foundation in this exciting new venture.

DG Penington, Vice-Chancellor

# THE KEY CENTRE FOR ASIAN LANGUAGES AND STUDIES AT GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

**by Colin Mackerras**

Although the importance of Asia for Australia and its future has been obvious for a long time, it is only in the last few years that this has begun to bear upon the Australian community at large. Not only is Australia increasingly recognised as a near neighbour of Asian countries, but by some even as part of Asia itself. Trade with various Asian countries has expanded rapidly and more and more Australians visit Asian countries. Asian people have become a significant part of Australia's multicultural community.

Dealing with Asia on the scale and in the way government and other circles alike think appropriate necessitates that the people as a whole should develop an understanding of Asia. It is all very well for us to appreciate that Asian peoples, including those Asians living in Australia as Australians, have important cultures, but a real understanding, and full dealings, mean that the Australian media must take more notice of Asia, the government must develop a whole range of cultural contacts, lawyers must understand how law operates in Asian countries, more people must gain familiarity with Asian languages, and so on. At the heart of this development of understanding Asia and its peoples is the education system.

The Australian Government has provided funding for initiatives in developing cultural relations with Asia for some time. The National Policy on Languages has been a major funding source for the study of Asian languages at all levels of education. In 1979 the Australia-China Council was established with the aim of expanding cultural relations with China. In May 1986, the Government announced the setting up of the Asian Studies Council under the chairmanship of Dr Stephen FitzGerald. This body has developed a sound program and been active in pushing forward the study of Asian languages and Asian studies at all levels and in all sectors of the Australian community.

Although Australian universities have tried to develop the study of Asia for several decades, and produced some impressive results as early as the 1950s, expansion has been rapid in the last few years. Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian are all taught in universities in almost all states nowadays. On the other hand, other Asian languages are still very much in their infancy, including important ones such as Korean, Vietnamese and Thai. The Asian Studies Council has set it as a national goal that 5% of tertiary-level students should be learning an Asian language by 1995.

In the secondary and primary schools, Asian languages are still not well-developed in comparison with European languages. The frontrunner is Japanese, which has in the last three to four years undergone a growth so fast that it has been extremely difficult to supply enough teachers. Chinese still lags somewhat behind, but is making good progress. Indonesian is widely taught in the Northern Territory, but in the country as a whole, has unfortunately actually declined slightly in the last few years.

***At the heart of this development of understanding Asia and its peoples is the education system.***

Up to now, other Asian languages have tended to be confined to the relevant Asian community, which means that those languages such as Korean and Thai, which apply to peoples not well represented in Australian society, are hardly taught at primary and secondary level at all.

The Key Centre for Asian Languages and Studies was established by the Department of Employment, Education and Training in the second half of 1988. Jointly operated between Griffith University and The University of Queensland, both in Brisbane, it is so far the only Key Centre devoted to Asian languages and studies. The Department allocated $310,000 for the first year, and slightly less for subsequent years, to be divided equally between the two programs. The reason for the drop is that some of the money was allocated to the purchase of necessary equipment for use over several years. This article looks at the programs of the Key Centre located at Griffith University. There is considerable cooperation between the two Universities, especially in the area of Korean studies.

There are three main functions specified for the Key Centre for Asian Languages and Studies at

Griffith University. These are curriculum development, Korean studies and community involvement.

## Curriculum development

The area of curriculum development is of crucial importance in the development of Asian studies, especially in primary and secondary schools. It is also a controversial area and one on which parents, community groups, government departments and others hold strong views. The Key Centre has approached its job of involvement in curriculum development in Asian studies very carefully and with concern not to intrude in areas that are already well-catered for.

One of its earliest and most important projects was the development of a series of twenty Chinese-language television programs, each of half an hour. Entitled *Dragon's Tongue*, the series has been produced by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in conjunction with Griffith University and with the strong support of the Asian Studies Council, which contributed $400,000 to the venture.

The basic aim of the series is to provide supplementary Chinese-language teaching materials, of which there is currently a serious dearth. It is not designed as stand-alone material: in other words students will not be able simply to learn Chinese from the beginning through the series. What they will be able to do is to learn to speak and comprehend authentic Chinese as it is spoken in authentic situations. They will be able to gain an understanding of the sociocultural surroundings in which the language is spoken.

***Language is clearly a crucial part of the study of Asia, but not the only one.***

Methodologically, the series is based on the Australian Language Levels (ALL) principles, which emphasise authenticity and sociocultural goals.

Because it was so important that the language should reflect the natural and authentic usage of Beijing, I went with an ABC camera crew to Beijing twice, the first time in September and October 1988 and the second time in October and November 1989. Most of the Chinese spoken is by background speakers, and in particular those living in Beijing with the natural accents and body language of inhabitants of Beijing.

The programs focus on particular themes, such as family, daily routine, school, sport, health, food and so on. There are some explanations, in English, of Chinese life and also of the development of the Chinese language, but there is no demonstration of grammatical points. Most of each program consists of small dramas in Chinese, in particular a 'soapie' which deals with the activities of a particular Beijing family.

Ten programs of this series were screened on ABC television for the first time from February to April 1990. With help from the Key Centre, the ABC has produced a simple but very inexpensive book containing the scripts of the ten programs. The Chinese-language segments are identical with the television programs, and set out in three columns: Chinese characters, romanised Chinese (pinyin), and English translation. In addition, it has given professional and financial support to the ABC to produce audiotapes containing the Chinese-language segments of the television programs. Although the speakers are not the same people as in the television series, the language used is identical. This means that students can repeat the texts and improve their comprehension by hearing it several times.

Ten more programs are currently in preparation, and the whole series of twenty should be screened as a totality shortly. One feature of these ten which departs from the ten already screened from February to April 1990 is the inclusion of small dramas set in Australia and about the lives of Chinese immigrants in Australia and their interactions in our multicultural society. The first program of the series is to be an inservice program, designed to show teachers and students how they might make best use of the series for teaching and learning purposes.

The Key Centre has also produced its own videotape for schools and other educational institutions which provides short dramas focusing on the life of a particular Chinese family living in Australia. Prominence is given to the friendship of the son with an Australian friend Alan and to the family's relations with Australian neighbours. The aim is to provide an understanding, in Standard Chinese, of how Chinese people get on in Australia and to present images of peers with ability to converse in Chinese.

Language is clearly a crucial part of the study of Asia, but not the only one. Recently the Key Centre has turned attention to developing materials of use to secondary and tertiary educational institutions for the study of Asian history, politics and other disciplines. There are two specific projects here.

One aims to assist secondary school teachers and students. It will gather useful printed documentary material referring to Asia since 1945. Six countries have been selected for study: China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam, but considerable attention is given also to international relations, and especially Australia's relations with Asia. Particular themes have been isolated as appropriate to the Asian experience and for their value to the school curricula in all states.

The other project is a large-scale textbook for use mainly by Australian tertiary-level students covering the history of East and Southeast Asia since the sixteenth century. The same six countries have been selected for particular attention, but the design of the book will be mainly thematic. A special section of the book will be devoted to Australia, including a focus on Asians in Australia, and relations with Asian countries. The aim is to assist not only those universities which currently run courses in Asian history, but to facilitate the growth of other courses in the coming years. This book will be ready for use by the beginning of 1992.

## The introduction of Korean studies

Korea is a country of considerable significance in Asia, both strategically and economically. South Korea has become one of Australia's main trading partners, yet until now it has been almost totally ignored in Australia's education system.

One of the Key Centre's earliest actions was to appoint a consultant to advise on the likely success of teaching Korean in Brisbane at both The University of Queensland and Griffith University. He visited South and North Korea and explored what was happening elsewhere in Australia and the English-speaking world. On the basis of his advice, the two Brisbane universities decided to go ahead with the teaching of Korean in 1990. The Key Centre appointed Mr Kim Chong-Woon as a lecturer to begin the teaching of Korean in both universities.

In 1990, Griffith University took in nearly 370 students to begin its courses in Modern Asian Studies and International Business Relations, both of which include learning an Asian language. Until 1989, three were offered, Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese, but with the addition of Korean there are now four.

***Australia ignores its own interests if it does not respond to the challenge Asia will continue to pose***

Student choices are as follows: Japanese, 187; Korean, 80; Chinese, 57; and Indonesian, 44.

On this basis, there is no doubt that Korean will continue to be taught in Brisbane. The Key Centre has appointed additional staff to cope with the number of students at Griffith University, which is very much larger than originally expected. Moreover, it is the Key Centre's plan to expand the teaching of language into more general Korean studies. Already some lectures on Korean history, political economy and society have been introduced into the first-year courses, but the expectation is to mount special courses dealing with Korea in the present century, and especially its political economy since the end of the Korean War in 1953.

## Community involvement

The Key Centre for Asian Languages and Studies has also undertaken some work in the area of community involvement. It has organised and paid for several conferences aimed at facilitating the work of the National Reference Groups set up by the Asian Studies Council for the various Asian languages, as well as several working sessions to plan and develop the materials on Asian history and politics mentioned above. It has organised inservice sessions for the ABC-Griffith television series *Dragon's Tongue* discussed earlier. It has contributed financially and professionally to the periodical Asian Studies Review, the journal of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, and to the Conference of the same Association held in July this year.

The Key Centre's main activity up to now in the field of community involvement has been a large-scale conference held at Griffith University in June 1989. The aim was to discuss the implementation of a substantial report on Asian studies at tertiary level commissioned by the Asian Studies Council and compiled by a team headed by Professor John Ingleson of the University of New South Wales. There was lively discussion of many major themes, such as teacher education, the role of language in Asian studies, and the difficulties faced in overcoming indifference and even hostility in some parts of the community. The Conference resulted in a range of recommendations which were sent to relevant government, industry, legal and other bodies.

## Conclusion

The Chairman of the Asian Studies Council, Dr FitzGerald, has spoken of a 'revolution' as essential to increase the awareness of Asia to the extent which will be necessary to Australia in the 1990s and into the twenty-first century. The region is likely to expand economically and become more important politically, and Australia ignores its own interests if it does not respond to the challenge Asia will continue to pose. Despite substantial progress, I must admit to being unable to see anything I would describe as being remotely like a revolution. There is a hard row to hoe in front of us. The Key Centre for Asian Languages and Studies cannot, of course, do much by itself, but I believe it can claim some substantial achievements in its so far short life.

*Professor Colin Mackerras is Co-Director of the Key Centre for Asian Languages and Foundation Professor in the Division of Asian and International Studies, Griffith University. He has written widely on Chinese history and culture, and is presenter of the ABC series on Chinese language and life* Dragon's Tongue.

# TECHNOLOGY AND ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS AROUND AUSTRALIA

by Jonathan Anderson

***An extensive enquiry into the use of technology in adult literacy programs has just been completed. The report (1) which was commissioned by the Department of Employment, Education and Training was conducted under the auspices of the Adult Literacy Action Campaign, as part of the Federal Government's National Policy on Languages.***

## Aims and purposes

The major aim of the enquiry was to report on the use of technology in literacy programs and projects around Australia which cater for the special needs of adults. Part of the purpose was to describe some of the ways newer technological tools – the so-called new technologies – are being used in conjunction with more traditional learning materials to assist adults acquire literacy. As a guide to teachers and administrators who might contemplate their use, an attempt was made to gauge the effectiveness of the newer approaches, as well as to evaluate the potential of technologies for literacy teaching.

## What are the new technologies?

The term *new technologies* is commonly applied to those technologies ushered in by the microprocessor, and is thus frequently identified with computers. The ubiquitous microprocessor, found in most of today's tools, from telephones to cameras, from television receivers to photocopiers, certainly underpins much current educational technology, including book printing. But to the extent that all technologies are at some stage new, a more appropriate term is *computer-based technologies*.

The Brumby Report (1989) makes one very important point about technology:

> *'Technology is more than equipment, it also embraces the way in which equipment and materials are used and the learning experience provided'. (Brumby 1989, p 13)*

Adopting this wide view, educational technology includes the use of such tools as the familiar book, blackboard and overhead projector; it includes the use of radio, television, cassette and video recorders, and telephone, together with associated radio and television programs, audio and video tapes, and teleconferencing; it includes the use of computers, satellite, and optical laser disc technologies, together with associated computer software, CD-ROM discs and videodiscs, and it includes how all these tools and materials are used to help adults achieve literacy.

The approach to educational technology adopted in the report is similarly broad: it includes what is commonly thought of as low tech, as well as high tech. The use of print itself was not specifically examined, except in so far as learning materials, software manuals or courseware that accompany specific equipment are print based. The focus throughout was on the use of technology to enhance learning, not on technology as an object of study.

## A framework for evaluation

Since there was no readily available instrument for examining the range of technologies deployed in literacy teaching, it was necessary first to develop one. The development of a standardised measure and its application to a range of educational technologies may be among the more useful outcomes of the report.

The generalised set of criteria adopted were set forth in the form of questions – questions that administrators can or should ask about any technology, current or planned; questions that teachers can ask about the same technology; and questions that adult learners, too, can ask. The questions are grouped under headings, these constituting the evaluation criteria, and below each criterion and its associated questions is a rating scale. The criteria and the associated rating scales were designed to serve as a framework for evaluating the potential of different technologies. This framework was found most useful in that it provided a common measure against which a range of different technologies in use in adult literacy learning could be evaluated.

## What's happening in Australia?

One major chapter in the nearly 200-page report recounts how technology is being used to promote literacy among adults in all states. A paper from Western Australia typifies the very wide range of technologies in use in all states. Technologies included calculators, cameras, cassette duplicators, computers, digital clocks, facsimile machines, interactive video tapes, laminators, language laboratories, language masters, lettering machines, overhead projectors, photocopiers, slide-sound carousels, telephone answering machines, teletypewriters, television, typwriters (manual, electric, electronic), video cameras, video players, video tapes, word processors, 16mm projectors and film.

Electronic Learning Centres are a special feature in Queensland; pioneering work in teleconferencing is being done in Victoria; Lexiphon is a new learning system developed in Sydney; from South Australia come reports of learning trials with videodisc and narrowcast television; in Tasmania and the Northern Territory computers and other technologies are being applied to producing learning materials. These are just a few of the innovative projects being undertaken in the adult literacy field.

*To use the Aussie Barbie videodisc students need a computer, videodisc player and touch screen monitor*

## Case studies of technology in use

Since a major purpose of the study was to see how technology was actually used and to seek the opinions and reactions of administrators, teachers and learners, a series of in-depth case studies was conducted. In selecting which technologies to examine in greater detail, consideration was taken of the different groups for whom literacy provisions need to be made – native English adult speakers, Aboriginal adults, adults with disabilities, and adults from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Accordingly, six separate case studies focused on the following areas:

computers as tools in literacy acquisition for all adults
teleconferencing as a means of reaching isolated communities
narrowcast television for targeting aboriginal communities
Lexiphon – a new literacy tool for trade training
talking computers for the blind
interactive videodisc as a tool for ESL learners.

Two further case studies focused more directly on the use of computers and computer software suitable for adult learners.

In the space here it is not possible to provide more than a flavour of the learning experiences available to many adult learners as they explore the use of newer tools in developing literacy. From one of the case studies comes a brief snap shot in the form of diary notes made as a group of adults work at the Adult Literacy Unit of Gilles Plains TAFE with their tutor, Don Strempl.

*There are seven students working here tonight. They have arrived over a period of twenty minutes, some straight from work. Most of them have tasks to go on with, and Don has spent some time reviewing work with individuals and managing the use of materials. Looking around the unit, we see two students standing by the coffee machine, browsing through some holiday photos and swapping stories. They will soon move on to their tasks. Meanwhile, in the same room, at the IBM computer, a non-reader is working on Road Law. This student is responding to graphically presented road intersection problems: at fifty-one years old, one of his objectives is to learn to drive.*

*In the other area, at a Macintosh computer, a student is using MacWrite to complete an essay. This student is typing from her handwritten, edited manuscript. The essay is on the Australian Aborigines and has been researched and written out of interest, for her own satisfaction, not for any study requirements. She has, with the help of the teacher, saved her work from a previous occasion and has loaded it tonight in order to complete it. Some on-screen editing has already been done. When the essay is completed it will be printed and checked for reworking, with the help of the teacher. However, throughout the session, Don Strempl has been able to help with any queries, particularly in making sense of the handwritten text and correcting spelling.*

*A few metres away on the NEC computer, a student is working through Lex, Wizard of Words. While using this adventure program, the student occasionally dives into a pile of dictionaries and thesauruses next to the computer, selects an appropriate one and responds to the computer problem. Now and again other students become involved in his efforts, and word suggestions and predictions will flow, in a manner typical of healthy learning environments.*

*Two students on the Apple IIe are trying to unravel the mysteries of 'Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?' This adventure game has at times made them scratch their heads and revisit the user's manual. They have, however, uncovered some clues on the elusive criminal, by retrieving information from the computer, and from the accompanying atlas, and they have established some thinking strategies for using the information they encounter. By talking to each other about the messages they are receiving, and by asking for help from Don Strempl, they have succeeded in making some sense of the on-screen situation. After about* *half an hour they needed a break from this program. However, the discussions over coffee were influenced by their recent experience on the computer.*

*On an Apple clone, a student works through Fractions, a drill and practice program. He has a picture framing business, and wants to improve his maths skills, particularly fractions and decimals, as they are important to his work.*

*What do the adult learners think of computers and the way they have changed many literacy learning activities? Here is what one young lady, Tracy, had to say: 'School was the pits. I was stuck in the opportunity class. It was boring . . . I couldn't sit down with a piece of paper and study; it was no challenge at school. Computers have made a lot of difference to me. They're good 'cos you don't put pen to paper; my handwriting is bad. Computers are exciting.'*

*Pina, too, finds computers useful as an adjunct to learning: 'Because of this language problem, I wouldn't be able to manage going into an ordinary class, it all gets jumbled. In a situation with lots of information, I can't cope, I have difficulty. But with a computer I can just walk away from the machine and come back later!'*

When asked about the benefits of computers and whether they have a depersonalising effect, their tutor, Don Stremple, responded: 'We see as much of the students as they need, but they can need us less if they've got a computer that has an appropriate program. It's absolutely marvellous when trying to look after 6-10 students all doing individual programs. While we talk at this moment, we've got one student working on a word processor, to write and also to brush up on typing, another working on the Penn State courseware, a non-reader, and he's obviously learning . . . Learning does occur.'

An administrator's view confirms that computers are part of a successful learning environment at Gilles Plains College: 'We should be providing an environment where, having made the courageous decision to enter a literacy program, adults can actually see some progress. That's not saying you can't do that without computers – you can. But it's easier if you have on your desk a tool that is usable in a very individual way.'

In a subsequent issue of Vox, we will focus on some of the other exciting uses of technology taking place around the country – such as, for example, how a blind student used his newly acquired skills to format assignments for sighted tertiary students, how groups of students in an ESL class access information from videodisc, or how an adult student who could barely read his name helped his tutor to add digitised speech clues to a personalised software package he had himself written.

## Concluding comments

There are many observations that could be made about the use of technology in adult literacy programs. However, the overriding impression from the evaluation, a small part of which is reported here, is that in comparison with developments in other countries, a very wide range of technology is being used in Australia. The case studies focus not only on computers but on television, video, satellite and optical laser disc. Evident in this focus is the transition in software development from silent learning tools to tools with speech capabilities.

Another impression, almost as prevailing as the former, is the way Australia is taking a lead in certain developments in the adult literacy field. Technology, like Lexiphon, has been developed in Australia, often on shoestring budgets. DUCT, too, is an Australian invention. Both break new ground in providing literacy services to adults.

Yet other impressions from this national survey are how literacy materials are being developed for adult learners in ways that are uniquely Australian, and how these are being employed by teachers in innovative ways. The Aussie Barbie ranks high in comparison with videodiscs produced elsewhere. The sense of humour in many of the film sequences is part of what makes this disc particularly effective with second language learners, as well as peculiarly Australian. Indigenous software, such as that employed in the talking computers for the blind, is similarly innovative, while at the same time designed to meet real needs. These developments, in software and in hardware, need now to be developed further, to be marketed and exported.

### Notes

Requests for copies of the Report may be made to the Executive Director, ILY Secretariat, Department of Employment, Education and Training, GPO Box 9880, Canberra ACT 2601

### References

**Brumby, J.** (1989). An Apple for the Teacher? Choice and Technology in Learning. Report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training. Canberra: AGPS.

### Acknowledgements

The study reported here was directed by Jonathan Anderson, Professor of Education at Flinders University. Alison Cheetham acted as research assistant for the duration of the project. Richard Grice, Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Queensland, joined the research team while on study leave, during which time he assisted in the evaluation. The fourth member of the research team was Brian Marshall who completed some of the case studies as part of a Master of Education degree.

*Dr Jonathon Anderson is currently Professor of Education at Flinders University, South Australia*

"...Australia is taking a lead in certain developments in the adult literacy field."

"...literacy materials are being developed for adult learners in ways that are uniquely Australia..."

# LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH: NEW PROGRAMS IN QUEENSLAND

**by Linda Apelt**

***The publication of the National Policy on Languages and the subsequent distribution of funds to Queensland from the Australian Second Language Learning Program (ASLLP) and the Asian Studies Program of the National Policy on Languages, administered by the Asian Studies Council, have had a significant impact in supporting the implementation and the extension of a number of innovative programs designed to increase student access to learning a Language other than English (LOTE) and to provide quality teaching.***

***ASLLP funding in the Queensland Department of Education has been divided into five components: Pilot LOTE Programs, Curriculum Development, Professional Development, Policy Development and Strategic Planning, and Evaluation.***

***From the initial stages of funding Queensland has endeavoured to maintain a balance across languages of Asian and European origin and to promote programs which can be sustained beyond the period of seeding monies.***

## The extension of LOTE programs through primary to tertiary education

Pilot LOTE Programs commenced in 1988/89 and aim to expand existing programs, introduce new programs, examine various models of program delivery and trial innovative techniques in language teaching and learning. They are particularly important in developing models to promote continuity P-12 and into tertiary education.

An increase in the number of primary schools wishing to offer a LOTE program has in part been sparked by P-10 curriculum development. Queensland's draft P-10 Curriculum Framework makes a clear statement about a minimum period of two consecutive years of LOTE and achievement expectations for students. The expansion of LOTE programs in primary schools has therefore become a priority.

Clusters consisting of one or more secondary schools and a number of feeder primary schools or links between a primary and secondary school have been established. Schools work co-operatively in designing, developing and delivering programs. At present the cluster primary schools are frequently serviced by teachers from the secondary school. Regions have identified and established further clusters on their own initiatives.

Experimentation with a tertiary link has occurred at Benowa State High School where graduates from the immersion course are given extension work in Years 11 and 12 by staff from the Department of French, University of Queensland.

With the support of ASLLP funding a Senior Primary/Junior Secondary Languages other than English Syllabus together with guidelines and a sourcebook are being developed by Curriculum Development Services. The curriculum materials are non-language specific and are therefore appropriate to all LOTE programs. The documents draw upon the Australian Language Levels (ALL) Project Guidelines and Queensland's P-10 Language Education Framework and address the provision of continuity of LOTE across the P-10 years.

## The use of technology in the teaching of LOTE

Telelearning programs have been introduced in a number of languages and schools to overcome problems of distance and of very small classes and/or teacher shortages. Telelearning involves the use of headphones, computers and facsimile machines.

In the field of distance education, Queensland has begun developing a teaching package for Years 9-10 for Italian. Queensland has subsequently taken

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on responsibility for writing a framework for Distance Education in Italian Years 6-12, plus the development of a multi-media resource package.

Queensland is participating in the national DEaL Project. The information gathered in Queensland will provide guidance for Distance Education LOTE (DELOTE) at the School for Distance Education and until a national database is established, information will be stored on a DELOTE database, a component of a state-wide online information system being established by the Department of Education.

## Co-operative syllabus development

In addition to the projects already mentioned, the development of a Japanese Language Curriculum K-12 is being undertaken by officers in Curriculum Development Services together with officers of the Western Australian Ministry of Education. It is anticipated that the syllabus guidelines for Stage One (upper primary/lower secondary beginners) and syllabus guidelines for Stage A and Stage B (lower primary and middle primary beginners) will be trialled in 1991. Initial drafts for Stages 2,3,4 and 5 are currently being revised. Development of resources including cultural activity cards and graded reading material is underway.

## Professional development initiatives

The major thrust of the Queensland professional development program has been to support the classroom LOTE teacher.

Professional development initiatives are utilising various inservice models, including television transmission using satellite (TSN-11), and a district leaders' network for facilitating inservice throughout the state. The priority areas for inservice are LOTE proficiency and LOTE methodology.

Inservice activities to maintain and upgrade LOTE proficiency skills and update teaching methodology involve the participation of native speakers including the language advisers, quality LOTE staff and tertiary LOTE personnel. The need for inservice for LOTE methodology has increased with the expansion of LOTE programs into primary schools because teachers with some LOTE proficiency but no formal LOTE method training are being identified. LOTE methodology inservice is also needed where the language being taught is not catered for in all teacher education institutions.

To further assist teachers to create interesting learning experiences, ASLLP and Asian Studies Council funds have contributed to the development of a variety of resources. These resources have been and are being developed in a number of languages. These include:

The French S.O.S. kit; Chinese videos with cultural information and pronunciation exercises, student workbooks, song books and readers, Italian materials; an Indonesian AV and material package produced at a teachers of Indonesian seminar held at Griffith University; a German Junior Resource Kit (suitable for Years 9 and 10) and a Senior Resource Package (Years 11 and 12); Japanese videos on language and culture, story booklets and a collection of authentic materials from Japan. To assist planners of programs a handbook for the introduction of a LOTE program is being developed. Materials produced are housed at the Queensland LOTE Centre.

The increased activity in LOTE has resulted in the establishment of the Queensland LOTE Centre. It will act as a reference and resource library for language teachers, as a clearing house for interstate and overseas documents, which can help LOTE teachers resource their courses in line with existing programs and provide seminar and workshop facilities for small groups. The advisory teachers will also be based at the Centre.

At present the Queensland Department of Education employs full-time language advisers for French, German, Japanese and Chinese. The Chinese advisory teacher was originally employed part-time as an Asian Studies Council initiative. The initiative was then taken up in full by the Queensland Department of Education. The Italian Government currently sponsors an Italian Adviser part-time.

Three intensive language courses for the retraining of teachers have been funded by the Asian Studies Council to address the demand for more Japanese teachers in our schools.

The Queensland Department of Education is investigating ways of offering ongoing inservice and formal recognition of studies in Japanese. One initiative taken is a Program in Language Teaching (Japanese) at Griffith University for permanent full-time teachers already employed by the Department to take place in 1991, leading to the award of a Graduate Diploma.

With co-management and co-funding of a number of initiatives in the areas of professional development and resource development, there has been increased intersystemic co-operation to the benefit of all parties.

## Evaluation

In 1989 the University College of Southern Queensland was given the task of evaluating the Pilot LOTE programs and professional development activities which have been supported by ASLLP funding. The evaluators were asked to:

- describe the scope, range and essential features of the Pilot LOTE programs, teacher development and curriculum development activities, and evaluate their contribution to the achievement of ASLLP goals;
- identify performance indicators relevant to specific strategies and goals and utilise these indicators in assessing the progress towards

achievement of those specific strategies and goals;

- assess the effectiveness and viability of various models of service delivery for LOTE programs and teacher development;
- explore the implications for future planning of current initiatives in LOTE in Queensland schools; and
- establish a process for the on-going evaluation of departmental LOTE initiatives.

The results of this review have not yet been presented by the evaluators.

## Planning for the future

To ensure that good practice and programs in LOTE can be sustained beyond the time of seeding funds, Queensland has conducted a statewide conferencing process to develop a comprehensive action plan for LOTE through collaboration with Regions and Divisions. A draft plan of action has been developed and refined into a discussion document as a basis for ongoing planning.

Strict criteria for pilot programs have been developed. Together with regular formal and informal evaluation it is intended that these programs will provide examples for future planning.

Looking to the future needs of schools, the importance of LOTE in pre-service studies for primary teachers was identified. A project has been conducted at the Brisbane College of Advanced Education, to study the provisions for teachers of LOTE as part of primary pre-service courses. This included experimentation with teaching methodology through the target language.

A significant development in 1990 was the request by the Minister for Education, Mr P. Braddy, for a Review of (Foreign) Languages and Cultures by the Centre for Applied Linguistics and Languages at Griffith University. The findings from the review were presented to the Minister in late April. The Minister has recently announced a substantial State Government commitment to supporting languages in Queensland schools.

## Conclusion

As can be seen from this overview, the support given under the National Policy on Languages has significantly boosted the position and recognition of languages in Queensland and has supported and or complemented the many activities already in place.

*At the time of writing, Ms Linda Apelt was the Queensland Chairperson of the Australian Second Language Learning Program.*

# THE AACLAME CONFERENCE
# 'LANGUAGE IS GOOD BUSINESS'
## 4-5 OCTOBER, 1990

*AACLAME is grateful for this article volunteered by Ms Jean Shannon (Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs), a speaker at the Conference*

What happens when you put a lot of big business people in a room with academics, language professionals and bureaucrats? Does this sound like a recipe for an atom bomb or a sweet souffle?

To make it worse, AACLAME carefully spiced the event with a dash of overseas language program experiences (valid or not valid?); a volume of Australian research into business export and language usage (lots of research to find little usage); and all of this was stirred up with trying to agree on what are the language needs of business and how could 'we' answer those needs.

For the first time in my history, I had a chance to attend a conference that attempted to break the 'chicken and egg' syndrome and tried to find a variety of answers to what had always been too hard a question. What? Time to stop going around in circles claiming that it could be solved if only someone else took responsibility?!!

The problems were obvious. Australian business could profitably expand overseas if they were more linguistically sensitive and capable. This would improve the balance of trade.

However, businesses on the whole:

- do not value language capabilities; and or
- are not aware of the benefits to business;
- or, are aware but dissatisfied with language training in Australia that is academically turning out languages and styles that do not meet their needs;
- or, have had some bad experiences with either private or public sector language service providers where they felt the service was not professional in it's presentation or approach (inconsistency in quality, reliability and lack of specialist knowledge available);
- or, those successful businesses that have identified their language needs and assets, do not have the in-house facilities to provide training nor do they have easy access to outside courses that they feel are appropriate for their requirements.

Some academic institutions had already begun to recognise that language skills are not enough and have begun to combine economics, business and other course degrees with languages.

Businesses clearly wanted short courses. Some academics were against the idea because of the low level of language ability that could be attained in such a course. Business felt that even though language ability might be low, it introduced their staff to cultural differences and it generated enormous good will even when a staff member was only able to say a few words.

Of course, there was plenty of room for argument. Many of the audience were translators and/or interpreters. They understandably felt defensive about the quality of services. Equally, some academics felt businesses were insensitive to true quality which could only come from lengthy academic study. Just about everyone felt the government should do more – though exactly what and how was the subject of some debate.

*Dr Neal Blewett, the Minister for Trade Negotiations opening the Language is Good Business Conference at the Australian National University, 4 October 1990. Mr Joe Lo Bianco introduced the Minister, whose address strongly supported the conference's goals*

*Ms Sue Fullagar of the National Languages Institute of Australia, Dr June Gassin of the University of Melbourne and Professor Jan Walls of the David Lam Centre for International communication, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver. Professor Walls spoke at the Conference.*

By the end of the lively two days, some avenues for exploration were becoming obvious.

1. The translator and interpreter businesses need to be more active in their marketing to corporations;
2. The Department of Trade (AUSTRADE) should continue to support and place more emphasis in advice to businesses on the importance of language. (A special trade award for companies that have discovered the benefits of linguistic skills in successful export dealings?)
3. Academics should continue to:
   - explore what are the appropriate languages to meet business needs in Australia (Arabic, German, Spanish, French, Japanese and various Asian languages were mentioned)
   - develop and market short courses for businesses
   - continue to push for double degrees in language plus agriculture, business studies, economics, engineering etc; and
   - lobby within the educational institutions for language courses not to be marginalised or seen as a luxury.
4. Language Service providers should continue to push for quality, consistency and timeliness as well as continue to lobby for government to maintain the importance of language in the schools and academia.

The last point made me feel that DILGEA's investment in the upgrading of their language services was a stroke of timeliness. This certainly is a time when the whole profession is evaluating their development so far and preparing themselves for the future.

There was lively debate, much discussion and many places where all parties agreed to disagree. However, there were some concrete advances in understanding, a few friendships formed and a lot of contacts made. I didn't think it would all be resolved in two days and no doubt, several meetings such as this one will be needed. Nevertheless, I really think that AACLAME made an important start to what couldn't have been an easy task.

It was a novel idea and perhaps a milestone for the profession. Fancy getting the 'manufacturers' (academics), the 'supplier' (private agencies), the 'service' (interpreters and translators) and the potential 'consumers' (businesses) talking to each other! What a rational place to start to design the language services Australia will need in the future. Well done, AACLAME.

# FRENCH IN AUSTRALIA:
# NEW PROSPECTS

**by Joseph Lo Bianco and Alain Monteil**

***Centre d'Etudes et d'Echanges Francophones en Australie and the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers, Canberra 1990.***

***This recent study of French in Australia describes the new and continuing roles of the French language in Australian education. The primary goal of the book is to trace the relevance of French in public affairs and in intellectual, cultural and commercial endeavours. The French language is given a contemporary visage, so to speak, in the Australian context with its unique geography, economic directions and cultural-historical background.***

## FIVE DIMENSIONS OF FRENCH TEACHING IN AUSTRALIA ARE EXPLORED

- First of all, French still remains the language on which the majority of Australian students cut their linguistic teeth. Because of its closeness to English and the great array of resources available, the authors agree that education planners can meet the goal of having a second language learning experience for large numbers of Australian students more easily with French than with many other languages.

  Aspects of this issue are tackled by the authors by pointing to ways of providing the best instruction for the most students in a variety of environments: in ordinary schools with moderate levels of resources, and in schools which are generously endowed with teaching materials and human resources. The authors suggest that this can be extrapolated to other language learning situations.

- Secondly, the study of French is discussed in relation to its siblings within the Indo-European family of languages, and the many benefits available to a learner of a Romance language from the knowledge of another Romance tongue. When you consider who the brothers and sisters of French are, and the role they play in Australia, this aspect of French, the authors believe, is vital to its standing in Australia.

- Thirdly, the geo-political or strategic significance of French is stressed. French is a language with portability: a lot of the world uses it, works in it, writes science and literature in it and negotiates treaties, agreements and accords in it. The status of 'world language' can certainly still be attributed to French.

- Fourthly, the authors delve into the worlds of business, work, trade and science. It is here that the past advocacy for French has been sadly neglected. When people say that Australian companies use French words to sell their products, they refer to the 'cachet' of the language, that is, to its attractiveness. But there is a far more mundane, perhaps, but very pragmatic reason, which has to do with the great size of the economic machine whose principal language is French. The authors discuss such issues as trade negotiations, the economic integration of Europe in 1992 and science production.

- Fifthly, the book deals with aspects of cultural prestige, and how it can be a motivating force for many students.

The authors agree that Australia's language needs and priorities encompass many languages, such as Japanese, Indonesian, Greek, Vietnamese and Italian, but among them French continues to occupy a central and important place. The authors' explicit purpose in writing this book is to enlighten readers as to why this should be so.

*French in Australia: New Prospects* is available free of charge, from the French Embassy, 6 Perth Avenue, Yarralumla, Canberra.

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# NATIONAL LANGUAGES INSTITUE OF AUSTRALIA

## Launch by the Prime Minister

On Wednesday 21st of November 1990 the National Languages Institute of Australia (NLIA) was officially launched by the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr R J L Hawke, in the Great Hall of the National Gallery in Melbourne.

More than 650 people attended the launch. Those present included politicians, representatives of professional organisations and government departments, academics and specialists in many disciplines.

The Prime Minister, Mr Hawke and the Director of the NLIA, Mr Joseph Lo Bianco, addressed the guests. The speeches focused on important language issues, such as the contribution that language proficiency may make to successful trade negotiations.

Mr Hawke said Australia increasingly earned a large part of its export dollar from countries that did not speak English. This left Australia with a major challenge – the need to improve the way Australia interacts with markets where languages other than English are spoken. 'With the inevitable emergence into the global economy of the countries that once formed a bloc of centrally planned nations – the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe – Australians will need to ensure we can compete in these new markets on their linguistic terms,' Mr Hawke said.

The Research and Development Centres of the NLIA organised exhibitions and demonstrations of materials and programs in the Great Hall. Guests at the launch were given the opportunity to see and test the exhibits. The Mnemosyne Quartet provided musical entertainment in the form of baroque and romantic pieces.

THE NATIONAL
LANGUAGES
INSTITUTE
OF AUSTRALIA

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# AACLAME PUBLICATIONS

1 The Journal of the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education – VOX – Issue No 1. August 1988 (green):

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- Multicultural & Cross-cultural Supplementation Program
- National Aboriginal Languages Program
- Asian Studies
- Australian Second Language Learning Program
- Adult Literacy Action Campaign
- English Literacy Action Campaign

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Australia and Japan: Cross-cultural Communication Problems (by JV Neustupny)

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**10** AACLAME Occasional Paper No 3 – Adult Literacy Action Campaign: Projects Around Australia – A review of state and territory level adult literacy projects funded under the Adult Literacy Action Campaign of the National Policy on Languages.

**11** AACLAME Occasional paper No 4 – A Review of the Australian Second Language Learning Program – Moss Dixon and Anne Martin – March 1990.

**12** AACLAME Occasional Paper No 5 – Review of the National Aboriginal Languages Program – Lynett Riley-Mundine and Bryn Roberts – 1990.

**13** The Relationship between International Trade & Linguistic Competence – Department of Employment, Education & Training- Report to AACLAME – John Stanley, David Ingram, Gary Chittick.

**14** National Survey of Language Learning in Australian Schools 1988.

**15** AACLAME – Bilingualism: Some Sound Advice for Parents (pamphlet 1990).

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***17** Three Research Papers on Bilingualism being:

a) McNamara, T., Dopke & Quinn (1989) Psycholinguistic Aspects of Bilingualism

b) Rado, Marta (1989 Bilingualism and the School Community

c) Saunders, George (1989) The Sociolinguistic Aspects of Bilingualism: Bilingualism and Society

**18** AACLAME Report to the Minister for Employment, Education and Training: National Policy on Languages December 1987 to March 1990.

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These publications are all available from AACLAME Secretariat, Languages Policy and International Relations Branch, Department of Employment, Education and Training, GPO Box 9880, Canberra, ACT, 2600 or Tel: 06 276 7716.

* These will be produced by the National Languages Institute of Australia during 1991.

# Contributed Articles

The following articles by noted academics and practitioners in the field of language policy and education are intended to provide, collectively, an indication of the broad scope of language policy, and, individually, an introduction to some key issues and concerns in specific areas.

The views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of AACLAME or the Department of Employment, Education and Training. The following contributions are the opinions of the authors.

# WORLD TRENDS AND ISSUES IN ADULT LITERACY: INTERREGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

**by H S Bhola**

***To make an objective statement on world trends and issues in adult literacy is, of course, impossible. A subjective statement may nonetheless be useful, especially if it invites reflection from a few others engaged in adult literacy work in International Literacy Year, 1990.***

## Diffusion of literacy around the world

The available statistics on literacy illiteracy, indicate a clear trend towards the universalisation of literacy around world. That is reason for optimism, but with a heavy dose of caution. The world is indeed destined to be fully literate (Bhola 1987). However, we need to make deep commitments and take bold actions to eliminate illiteracy by the year 2000.

Table 1 in presenting a general trend in literacy diffusion around the world, fails to bring out some important facts. First, most of the gains in adult literacy have resulted from the expansion of primary schooling world-wide and not from campaigns, programs and projects exclusively designed for and directed at the adult learner. This indicates that policy makers in most parts of the world have been unwilling to make the required policy choices and resource commitments to adult literacy. They have followed the gradualist approach of letting primary education do their work. The trend of the slowly but ever-decreasing illiteracy percentages may reverse itself, as the economies of the developing countries plunge deeper into recession, and more resources are withdrawn from primary education. Both enrolment and retention of children in schools in the Third World have been on the decline during the 1980s.

Second, the demographic explosion in the Third World has resulted in increased absolute numbers of adult illiterates even as the ratios of illiteracy have gone down. This trend happily will correct itself as the population bulge works itself out of the system.

Third, educational statisticians now think that the estimates and projections used in the table below may have grossly underestimated the magnitude of illiteracy since these statistics are often based on self-reported data.

Fourth, while disparities in literacy acquisition by sex are obvious from the table, some other disparities are not. There are, for instance, serious disparities in literacy acquisition by urban and rural locations, and by age cohorts. Rural illiteracy ratios may often be five times the illiteracy ratios in urban areas of the Third World. Illiteracy ratios increase as we go up the age ladder.

***Ninety-eight per cent of the illiterate population of the world lives in the Third World***

Fifth, the most glaring disparities exist relative to world regions. Even though illiteracy has been rediscovered in the industrialised countries of North America and Western Europe, these countries are still very well off in relation to universal literacy. The socialist economies have always paid considerable attention to adult literacy. The adult literacy campaign of the USSR from 1919-1939 has served as the mother of most literacy campaigns of the twentieth century (Bhola 1984a). Yet the East European socialist countries have slightly higher levels of illiteracy than countries of Western Europe.

The Third World is the worst off in adult literacy. Ninety-eight per cent of the illiterate population of the world lives in the Third World.

All the comments made above are based on a workable definition of literacy and on the dependability of statistics collected according to such a definition. However, definitional and statistical issues remain. We wish to invite serious definitional analysis and refinement of data collection techniques for building dependable

Illiteracy in the world and major regions in the age group 15 and over, from 1970 to the Year 2000

| Unit: millions | | 1970 | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WORLD | | | | | | |
| Population | MF | 2309.8 | 2879.2 | 3203.2 | 3545.7 | 4241.7 |
| Illiterates | MF | 760.2 | 824.1 | 857.2 | 882.1 | 911.9 |
| Illiteracy | MF | 32.9 | 28.6 | 26.8 | 24.9 | 21.5 |
| Rate (%) | M | 27.7 | 23.3 | 21.5 | 19.8 | 17.0 |
| | F | 38.0 | 33.9 | 32.0 | 30.0 | 26.0 |
| DEVELOPED COUNTRIES | | | | | | |
| Population | MF | 784.5 | 889.7 | 931.0 | 967.4 | 1039.7 |
| Illiteracy | MF | 3.7 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 1.8 | |
| Rate (%) | M | 3.0 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.4 | |
| | F | 4.3 | 3.0 | 2.6 | 2.2 | |
| DEVELOPING COUNTRIES | | | | | | |
| Population | MF | 1525.3 | 1989.5 | 2272.2 | 2578.3 | 3201.9 |
| Illiteracy | MF | 48.0 | 40.3 | 36.9 | 33.5 | 28.0 |
| Rate (%) | M | 39.6 | 32.2 | 29.1 | 26.3 | 21.9 |
| | F | 56.6 | 48.5 | 44.8 | 40.9 | 34.3 |

data bases on adult literacy, but would warn against exaggerating the problems related to both definition and data. Definitions of literacy, are important, but a universal definition of literacy which maintains across all languages or all nations speaking the same language, is impossible.

Related to the above is the question of counting literates and illiterates even within the framework of contextual definitions of literacy. Here, again, self-reported data will have to be used and good estimates made. Available statistics, even as imprecise quantities, have a clear qualitative message for us: illiteracy is a big problem, which needs immediate attention.

## The ideology of adult literacy: from charity, to radicalism, to pragmatism

Adult literacy work today is no longer an act of mere charity, or of noblesse oblige. It has also outgrown the philosophy of helping people to help themselves or of the professionalisation of labour. A new unmistakable ideological trend was set in the Declaration of Persepolis of 1975 (Bataille 1976) that, echoing Paulo Freire (1970), "considered literacy to be not just the process of learning the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, but a contribution to the liberation of man and of his full development. Thus conceived, literacy creates the conditions for the acquisition of a critical consciousness of the contradictions of society in which man lives . . . ." This is one of the most important and the most influential ideological statements on adult literacy of the last two decades.

The ideology of literacy for liberation has not, of course, abolished all other ideologies. Bhola's political model of literacy promotion (1988) identifies three different political cultures (gradualist, reformist, and revolutionary) with differentiated ideologies and consequently three different approaches to literacy promotion (project, program, and campaign).

In the socialist economies of the world, literacy was always an ideological matter. The illiterate, said Lenin, stands outside politics. Literacy was a sine qua non for creating a socialist culture. At the practical level literacy was linked with technology, i.e. with the professionalisation of labour and high productivity. Political education was taught in groups and then groups were socialised in the new ideology through all structures — social, political and economic. The overriding theme was to elevate both culture and technology.

In the West as well, the politics of literacy are now universally understood by scholars, and even the practitioners are beginning to understand the politics involved. Those who claim to be practically-oriented are acquiring a bi-focal vision. They are adding awareness to functionality.

In the Third World, ideological literacy produces more rhetoric than reality. While a few popular groups carry out small-scale popular literacy projects, government programs tend to be tame, irrespective of official rhetoric. Ideology is overwhelmed by hunger. Most often it is the ideology of modernisation and higher productivity, not of freedom and fairness.

A new trend may, however, be emerging combining freedom with bread. What we see is the emergence of 'functional literacy' built upon the concept of a generalised functionality which, while teaching critical consciousness, also teaches health care, family planning, protection of the environment and productivity.

At the most general level there is the issue of ensuring that literacy for liberation, while being pro-people, is not necessarily anti-state. Where the state is indeed responsive to the aspirations of peoples, the question is: How to ensure that critical awareness does not become equated with propaganda on behalf of the government's bureaucratic plans and initiatives?

An important issue remains in relation to the concept of dominant literacy (provided by the state) and ideological literacy (through spontaneous organisation of people on their own behalf). Some analysts go so far as to suggest that only popular literacy is worth attaining and all other literacy is dominant literacy. However, that negates the role of leadership by the agents of the state, and in the Third World countries the state is a very important agent of social change.

There are additional issues. Can awareness be taught by those who themselves lack critical awareness? Can functional literacy help if outside structures do not change? Will the middle men standing between the development elite and the poor ever let benefits flow to those for whom they are intended?

## Scope and substance of literacy policies

UNESCO'S program of 'Education for All' encourages all member nations to develop policies encompassing universalisation of primary education and to conduct programs of adult literacy commensurate with needs. The World Conference on Education for All sponsored by UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank held in Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990 advocated that all countries consider the following planning targets by the year 2000:

Primary education: each country will strive to ensure that at least 80% of all 14-year old boys and girls attain a common level of learning achievement for primary education, set by the respective national authorities.

Adult education: access to basic skills and knowledge for all.

Literacy: massive reduction of illiteracy with targets to be set by each country prioritised by age and sex.

The Conference agenda recognised 'the universal aspirations for literacy' and linked educational policies with disarmament and world peace. There was a special policy focus on the literacy of women, not only for reasons of equity and basic justice but also for the pragmatic reason of the total effect of women's literacy on intergenerational literacy, fertility, family health, community and society.

Over the last forty years, the policy now articulated by UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank has had varied manifestations in different regions and nations. Adult literacy has been a part of socialist policy agenda for a long time. In the West, it has been more recent. Universal primary education was supposed to have eliminated the problem of illiteracy. Industrialised countries were slow to admit to problems of illiteracy in their midst. The policies on adult literacy promotion are recent.

***Literacy has become central to the processes of development, both for democratisation and modernisation***

In the Third World where adult literacy is most needed, policy initiatives have been absent or not fully commensurate with needs. This situation is now changing. UNESCO'S initiative on Education for All has focused attention on adult education. Since adult education has serious limits without literacy, attention has shifted to policy making in adult literacy. The trend is increasingly toward policies of adult education with adult literacy. This has also put the role of media in proper perspective. There is policy consensus that media cannot carry the whole burden of adult education and development communication. Media often assume some literacy among listeners and viewers and media depend a great deal on the written word. Illiteracy is thus a disadvantage in learning from media. Undoubtedly, literacy has become central to the processes of development, both for democratisation and modernisation (Bhola 1984b).

There is a disquieting possibility in the otherwise bold initiatives of the World Conference on Education for All. The clearly stated numerical targets for primary education of 'at least 80% of all boys and girls' to receive primary education by the year 2000 will most likely be read as normative. On the other hand, qualitative aspirations for 'access to basic skills and knowledge for all' and relative suggestions in regard to 'massive reductions of illiteracy with targets to be set by each country and prioritised by age and sex' may be read as down-playing adult education and adult literacy.

An important challenge lies in learning to embed adult literacy policies within educational policies and to embed educational policies, in turn, within development policies.

An important policy issue relates to the interfaces to be developed between primary education, adult education and adult literacy within the context of 'Education for All'. Will primary schooling be primary, and out-of-school adult education and literacy be secondary? Will adult education compete with literacy? Or will adult education, at least in developing countries, be construed as adult education with literacy? Will there be an attempt to allocate fixed ratios of resources to each of the three educational initiatives to ensure attention is given to all three within an overall educational policy context?

## Theory and research: the professionalisation of literacy

Adult literacy policies have found persuasive justifications due to the professionalisation of the field of adult literacy. While some continue to talk of the 'dispossession of speech', and 'denial of narration' to the people through the diffusion of literacy, there are now clear theoretical findings to the effect that:

- all cultures today are print cultures, and that there are no fully autonomous oral cultures left in the world
- literacy today is assumed by all social structures — secular and sacred
- illiteracy today is, by definition, a disadvantage both for individuals and societies
- literacy may not have generalised cognitive consequences for the individual (the technology of intellect hypothesis may not be as general as first assumed) but literacy is certainly 'potential added' to the individual in making transactions with the total environment; and even rudimentary literacy has significant consequences for the new social definitions of individuals
- literacy brings to the individual liberation from dependence and is necessary for any accumulation of the knowledge capital
- literacy and development connections hold both at the individual and the collective levels. While literacy is not deterministic, and without help from surrounding structures is not effective, it shows important results within the locus of control of the individual.

Most of these theoretical developments have come from the West. The Third World has made contributions by being the testing ground of many of these theories and thereby promoting theory development. Substantive theoretical contributions from the Third World are the dependency theory, the theory of critical consciousness and the Gandhian concept of *Nai Talim* (new education) rooted in a new philosophy of work.

The issues here are essentially organised around the knowledge hegemony of the North over the South. Ninety-eight per cent of the world's illiterates live in the South, but most of the theory and research on literacy comes out of the North, particularly the North-West.

## Mobilisation for adult literacy

It is understood now that adult literacy work requires social mobilisation. Practitioners, however, seem too often to wait for the self-motivated to come to their doors seeking help to become literate! Motivations have to be mobilised.

In the market economies more is done to sell Pepsi and personalities than to sell literacy. Illiterates are supposed to come to literacy classes self-motivated.

In the Third World mobilisations for literacy are seldom planned, and rarely executed. Some Third World countries, among them Ethiopia and Tanzania, have adopted the idea of mass organisation from socialist countries and used it to mobilise for literacy work.

Issues of social mobilisation arise within a set of questions such as: What is the relationship between felt needs and fashioned needs? Is it not the role of leadership to fashion new needs and to teach new motivations? Is it not a misunderstanding of the process of social change to depend on the already motivated individual alone?

When does fashioning of new needs become manipulation and when does mobilisation become coercion? Where does the literacy worker as mobiliser of motivation stop so as not to impinge upon personal freedoms and individual privacies? What should be the combination in messages for mobilisation of the educational that reasons, and the emotive that seeks to suspend judgement?

***In the market economies more is done to sell Pepsi and personalities than to sell literacy.***

Mobilisation does not merely seek participation in literacy programs. It also seeks to mobilise people's resources. Is it fair to take even a little from those who already have so very little? When does the sacred cow of voluntarism become exploitation of the voluntary literacy teacher doomed to live in the rural areas without alternatives, social or economic?

## Institutions for the delivery of adult literacy

There has been considerable innovation in institution-building and organisation of literacy work and considerable borrowing and adaptation across cultures and countries. The opposite tendencies of centralisation and decentralisation are resolving into 'democratic centralism' where national direction of missions is combined with local initiative and implementation. A realistic division of labour between the government and non-government agencies is emerging.

Governments are placing literacy sometimes in the ministries of education (as literacy is seen as second chance formal education), sometimes in the ministries of culture (as literacy is seen as a generalised cultural enrichment), and at other times in the ministries of labour or social welfare (as literacy is seen as reducing a deficit among the disadvantaged). Few countries have organisational structures for the planning and delivery of adult literacy through provinces to districts and localities. At the field level, literacy organisation depends on voluntary work.

Combining the teaching of literacy code and economic function through coordination of two ministries or departments has often failed. A trend may be emerging involving the teaching of generalised functional literacy in an initial stage by the ministry of education, and then handing over a well-formed group to an extension ministry that can effectively teach advanced functional skills.

***Organisation for literacy can become the focus for general community organisation for other development work***

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are taking more and more interest in literacy. There is also the tendency for NGOs to join regional and national associations. Unfortunately, too many NGOs are receiving their funding from governments and are thereby losing some of their traditional freedoms.

Different approaches to the delivery of literacy continue at the same time, from large-scale national campaigns and programs, typically run by governments, to small-scale literacy programs and projects run by non-governmental agencies.

The organisation of literacy at the field level has at least three modes: an instructor teaching a class; or instructor teaching on a one to one basis; and teaching a whole family, treating illiteracy as an intergenerational phenomenon.

It is recognised now that the organisation for literacy can become the focus for general community organisation for other development work. There are examples from Zimbabwe that well-functioning income generation projects collapsed when the 'root organisation' of the literacy class died.

An important organisational issue is this: How to make adult literacy a part of the institutional mission of all extension agencies? How can inter-agency coordination be achieved and made to function on a day to day basis? The same issue appears in the need for literacy work to be coordinated with media institutions.

The role of NGOs versus the state in literacy remains an important issue, as does the division of leadership and labour. The problem is made more complex by the fact that NGOs in the Third World often find themselves seeking funds from the state. How to ensure that non-governmental agencies are not coopted by the funding agencies and thereby lose their freedom?

Another issue: Can we combine the features of the campaign, the program and the project in our literacy initiatives to get the best of all worlds — the enthusiasm of the campaign, the steadiness of the institutionalised program, and the local relevance of the small project? Also connected with the above is the issue of voluntarism and the conception of the role of the field worker as cadre versus functionary. Which one do we want?

## Curricula, constituencies, methods and materials of adult literacy

An understanding has developed of the relationship between the ideology and the technology of literacy. Curriculum choices are, of course, ideological: to teach the exercise of freedom or production of food; to empower or teach how to cope? There is an increasing emphasis on the content of literacy materials. Either/or choices are being avoided in favour of 'generalised functionality' that seeks to enable the newly literate to make effective transactions within the total cultural and technological environment. That does not mean, however, that this trend is universal. In the West, workplace literacy is being enthusiastically promoted. Computer-based literacy is another trend in countries where computers are becoming part of the electronic gadgetry of middle-class homes.

***Methodology may be marginal to the success of literacy promotion. Context and commitment may be more important.***

The disadvantaged, the poorest of the poor, refugees, migrants and immigrants, women and ethnic minorities are of special concern to literacy workers and special curricula are being developed for them. Literacy curricula for women – and men – will have to defreeze the current internalisation, institutionalisation and sanctification-ritualisation of the subordinate status of women prevalent in all cultures without exception. They will then refreeze newly invented definitions of self-concepts, mutuality in male-female relationships, gender-free division of labour, affirmative institutional norms and patterns and renewed cultural traditions (Bhola 1989).

Concern with the methodology of teaching literacy used to be obsessive. The understanding is now emerging that methodology may be marginal to the success of literacy promotion

Context and commitment may be more important. Alphabetical methods have been rejected in favour of holistic methods. The sight words taught in primers or thematic charts are ideologically hot such as 'hunger' and 'poverty'!

An important issue is: How much of the curriculum should be determined locally and how much of it globally? Shouldn't there be a dialectic between community needs and national development needs? How far should the adult literacy worker go in challenging traditions that have clearly become dysfunctional?

***Adult literacy work is being professionalised all over the world.***

In the teaching of generalised functionality, the issue of integration of literacy with skills training and with conscientisation arises. Which should be the point of beginning? The answer, of course, is simple: 'It depends!' Literacy should be central because it will make conscientisation and functionality both more potent, but it will depend on the particular context how the three are woven together in the fabric of the curriculum.

Should conscientisation, functionality and literacy all be embedded in instructional materials or could integration be complemented through actions outside the materials? It seems that trying to achieve full integration through materials alone may be an impossible and an unnecessary ideal. Functional literacy primers and materials might as well stay at the level of introducing relevant sight words and the ideas they represent. Speaking out the unspoken may be enough. Integration between literacy and function can and should be achieved from the fact of the same group participating in the literacy class as well as in income-generating projects and community organisation. Integration would emerge also from the literacy teacher, the community activist, the leader of the income generating project talking to each other, talking the same language, and sharing common purposes.

The language of literacy remains an issue. Literacy workers debate the choices between the mother tongue, a lingua franca, a national language and an international language of literacy. Illiterates in Botswana, irrespective of their mother tongue, want to learn literacy in Setswana because that is the language of politics and economics in the country. In Nepal, illiterates want to acquire literacy in the national language and not in their dialect. New literates in Zimbabwe, after gaining literacy in Shona or Ndebele, want to learn English.

## Training and recruitment of adult literacy workers

At the very top, the need is for 'the education of the literacy educators'. Sometimes policy makers seem to not fully understand the centrality of adult literacy in the development processes, resulting in a crisis of conviction. Such policy makers are obviously unable to argue for the allocation of resources to literacy promotion. An important role is being played in the education of the literacy educators by a variety of donor agencies which specialise in promoting discussion and dialogue and sponsoring professional networks.

Adult literacy work is being professionalised all over the world. In the West, training for adult education has been concentrated in the universities. However, few of these university centres offer courses in adult literacy. In socialist countries, adult education has received attention in specialised institutions outside the universities. Here again much less attention has been paid to adult literacy training per se.

Third World countries have done quite well in training middle level personnel in adult literacy programs. Several universities in Africa and Asia have college programs for training of teachers that include adult education and literacy work as part of the curriculum. Several centres and institutions within the development sector train personnel for literacy programs, including field level workers. In the methodology of training, a dialectic is emerging between 'training by objective' and 'training by participation'.

The question of training is linked with the issue of credentialing. Do only the credentialed have 'the right to teach'? Is the pre-occupation with training inhibiting contribution to adult literacy work by the committed and competent but not credentialed? What should be the combination between technical training and ideological training, between competence and commitment in our training programs?

An important issue relates to the training of literacy workers at front line? Since literacy teachers are often volunteers, governments are reluctant to invest in training them, especially when such training results in higher turnover. A related issue is: Where do we get a front-line literacy worker of the quality to act as a first-rate, full-time professional who will be able to integrate awareness, functionality and literacy in the teaching of an adult class?

For manpower at the middle and higher levels of policy making and programming systems, training is available only in countries such as England, Canada, United States and Scandinavia. Even at its best, such training does not relate fully to the realities in the home country and cannot be responsive to the needs of trainees.

The class bias of adult literacy workers can also be a serious issue. There may be overall less sympathy for adult education and adult literacy within the policy making cultures and within systems of implementation because of the class bias of those who are in control of making policy, and programming decisions.

## Evaluation in adult literacy

Until the 1960s, program evaluation was almost unknown, and literacy workers resisted the idea of subjecting adult learners to reading and writing tests.

With the current competition for scarce resources, literacy workers have been forced to demonstrate that literacy programs give acceptable levels of returns on investment.

Two trends are visible. Literacy campaigns, programs and projects are developing elaborate pencil and paper Management Information Systems (MIS), and are using these in policy development, program planning, and day-to-day monitoring of their initiatives.

Impact evaluations are being conducted, which make use of both quantitative survey data and qualitative ethnographic data. The demand for the so-called scientific and objective data is being put in perspective.

The most important issue in literacy evaluation is at the level of allocation of resources between implementation and evaluation of programs. Donors particularly can sometimes distort priorities. They can spend relatively generously on evaluation and relatively less on programs in trying to learn systematically from experience.

There is also the question of evaluands, those who are being evaluated. Some can be subjected to evaluation against their will. Others can be left out of the evaluation projects thereby being denied allocation of resources to their communities because they are not part of the experimental design.

The testing of adults has not been universally accepted and remains an issue. While the need for collecting MIS data has been accepted, the issue of a balance between numbers and meanings remains.

A variety of issues dealing with the utilisation of results remain. Who controls the information and what uses are made of it? Finally, there is the question of criteria. What impact should be looked into and what standards of satisfaction should prevail? For instance, too many evaluations seem to be looking in the wrong place, looking for gains in productivity in the formal sector and almost completely missing out on the informal sector within the locus of control of the new literate.

### Notes

1. This table is adapted from a *Summary and Statistical Review of Education in the World, 1960-1962*, Paris, UNESCO, 1984.

See also *Compendium of Statistics of Illiteracy*, Paris, UNESCO Office of Statistics, 1988.

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The main title of this paper and many of the ideas discussed here are taken from the author's recent book, *World Trends and Issues in Adult Education* (London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers and Geneva, Switzerland: UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 1989).

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# THE SAMOAN LANGUAGE IN THE NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

### by Bernard Spolsky

***In July and August 1987, I carried out a study of Maori-English Bilingual Education for the New Zealand Department of Education and submitted a report on my findings which has been published by the Department. At the end of the 1987 visit, it was suggested that I return to look at some of the language issues concerned with the education of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. After further discussion, it was decided to concentrate on the Samoan community. While many of the statements in this report may be generalisable to the other Pacific Island languages, it is not my intention to make any wider claims.***

This present report is based on a visit to Samoa and New Zealand in July and August 1988. I am grateful for the time and effort afforded me by members of staff of the New Zealand Department of Education, the Ministry of Education in Western Samoa, the National University of Samoa, the Ministry of Education, Auckland University, the Wellington Multicultural Resource Centre, the Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs and the principals, staff members and pupils I visited in Samoa and New Zealand.

I also acknowledge with gratitude the leave from Bar-Ilan University and its fund for international study that made this study possible.

## Underlying assumptions

Immigration sets a number of challenges to host country and immigrant alike. Underlying any attempt to meet these is a seemingly binary choice between complete assimilation in the new society and maintenance of traditional and original values and culture. In language terms, this is seen often as a forced choice between the new language and the old immigrant language. Just as bilingualism shows that the forced nature of the language choice is illusory, so multiculturalism shows that it is possible to find a way to avoid the pain of making an irrevocable decision to assimilate. This report starts from a number of assumptions: the first is that it is in fact possible to be bilingual and bicultural; indeed, that in the normal state of affairs, people master and use more than one language and variety and participate in more than one culture.

A second assumption is also basic. Access to equality of opportunity for new immigrants depends, among other things, on their being assisted to overcome language barriers to education and employment; in other words, on their being assisted to acquire full use of the standard language of their new country. But, as is shown by worldwide research, the successful acquisition of a second language does not necessarily depend on giving up the first.

***Language expresses culture; it is difficult for a culture to survive language loss.***

Three related principles follow from these assumptions. First, it is evident that an immigrant or other minority group that maintains the strength of its traditional cultural, social and religious values is better equipped to meet the major challenges of modernisation and immigration. The modernisation takes place inside the group as a whole, with provision of mutual support during the difficult transition. The alternative, where the full weight falls on individuals who have lost connections and identity results in anomie and social disharmony. In simple terms, the intact ethnic group provides both shelter from the trauma of too rapid a change and a method of gradual integration of the new values into the old.

Second, there is strong evidence that the maintenance of an ethnic language is a critical factor in maintaining ties to a great tradition and so to traditional ethnic social, religious and cultural values. Language expresses culture: a language is shaped by the society that uses it and the language in turn passes on social values to the children who acquire it. It is difficult for a culture to survive language loss.

From this, it follows as a basic educational principle that immigrant groups should be encouraged to maintain the use and strength of their home languages while they and their children are learning the new language. The advice that some teachers give to immigrant parents to speak the new language with their children is tragically misguided. New immigrants do not themselves speak the standard language well, so that their attempt to do so results in children being brought up in an impoverished linguistic environment rather than in the richest one their home can provide. Switching languages shows the parents in a poor light, as limited communicators. It denies the children access to traditional knowledge and values and builds a dangerous barrier between generations.

Bilingualism, then, is not a problem but a solution: it provides the most effective model for an immigrant group in a new society and the most effective model for successful integration of such groups.

***Bilingualism, then, is not a problem but a solution***

From these assumptions and principles, it will be apparent why the approach of this report has been to look for evidence of the maintenance of Samoan language among Samoans who, in New Zealand, are acquiring English. Others have traced the difficulties of assimilation, the problems with education and employment, the social problems faced by the community; my focus here is on steps being taken to deal with one fundamental aspect of the underlying causes of these problems.

## Samoan-English bilingualism in Western Samoa

The importance of the Samoan language to Samoan culture and society is clearly appreciated by Samoan leaders. Just how closely society and language are interwoven has also been shown in recent studies by anthropological linguists. The richness of the varieties of language that Samoans use, the significance of the Samoan language in learning and understanding social structure, the major importance of rhetorical skills in Samoan village and national political life, the universality of Samoan literacy and its central role in church and religious life, all these set a strong role for the language and explain the recognition of its importance at all levels. At the same time, since first contact with Europeans in the nineteenth century, as a result of German and New Zealand colonialism in the first half of the twentieth century and of the opening of Western Samoa to international cultural and economic influences, English has come to play an increasingly influential role in Samoan life. A sociolinguistic description of Western Samoa, then, must include English and while there is nothing like the serious loss of Samoan language use and knowledge to be found in American Samoa, there are nonetheless signs of serious erosion.

***The Samoan language is primarily the language of the home, the extended family, the village, the church.***

The Samoan language is itself supported by a number of traditional factors. It is primarily the language of the home, the extended family, the village, the church. It is further supported by its use in political life, both at the local and national levels: village and district councils and parliament conduct their business in Samoan and effective oratory is basic to political influence. It is the language of the radio. It is also the language of religious education: the main reading matter in home and church is the Bible in Samoan. There are several newspapers that are either monolingual or bilingual in Samoan.

In contrast, the spread of English is encouraged by a conjunction of modern and external forces. It is the preferred language of commercial life: it is used in business and commerce, firstly as the language of literacy (receipts, bills, accounts, business letters, contracts) and of conversation. It is the language used in interface with external or expatriate factors: the language in other words of mixed marriages, or of dealings with visitors. It is, primarily, the language of secular education: while teachers use Samoan, their main task is seen as the teaching of English and through English, of the school curriculum. English is the language of the overseas countries – New Zealand, Australia, the United States – that are seen as the place first, to go to complete an education and second, as a place for gainful employment. Samoans who have been overseas then show a tendency to use English as a mark of this valued experience. English is the language of television and video and of some of the newspapers. While Samoan is the language of parliament and political life, English is the language in which government conducts most of its written life. All these factors meet in Apia, the capital, which thus is the focal point for the spread of English.

A sociolinguistic study of Samoan would reveal not just the complexity of Samoan varieties (*tautala le'aga* 'bad' language used in conversations with peers and in normal daily life, *tautala lelei* 'good' language used in church and educational settings, the special registers of church and political life, the requirements for addressing superiors, the rhetorical rules of oratory, to mention some) but the developing interface with English. The following list is not intended to show absolute decisions, but the preferences associated with the contrasting factors:

| Supporting Samoan | Supporting English |
|---|---|
| village | town |
| church | school |
| speaking | writing |
| reading Bible | reading books |
| radio | TV and video |
| religious education | higher education |
| home | overseas |
| born in Samoa | born overseas |
| Samoan | Palagi |
| full blood | half-caste |
| politics | business |
| pastor | teacher |
| matai | official |
| Cabinet | department letters |

From general observation, I would say that the balance is still firmly in favour of Samoan language maintenance, but the increasing strength of proficiency in English is also accompanied by some shift towards the language. Education in Apia in particular shows this force and there are parents who want their children educated only in English; similarly, there are many children in school with a weak knowledge of Samoan. There has been a start on correcting this erosion by the teaching of Samoan language and culture in the schools, but this will need considerably more resources than are available at present. The establishment of the National University, with its emphasis on a strong Department of Samoan Language and Culture, is another step in this direction, but it must be noted that there are people who argue that the main purpose of the university should rather be to prepare students to study abroad, in English.

## The Samoan language in New Zealand

Clearly, the forces in favour of English are enormously stronger in New Zealand: not just school and work life, but also the general social environment are mainly English. The pull of modernism and the weakening of traditional ties combine with the natural pressure that there is on immigrant parents to use the school language. This is made even more serious because of the fact that for most Samoans, the main reported (and in many cases, actual) reason for coming to New Zealand was and is to obtain an education.

English was first brought into Samoan homes by the children going to school, but now that many such children are themselves parents, it is becoming the main language of some homes and there is an increasing number of Samoans born in New Zealand with limited knowledge of Samoan or none at all. I might mention a number of people I met. I think in particular of a New Zealand-born Samoan girl learning Samoan in one of the two sixth-form classes offered in the language; she would like to be able to speak the language, but is not ready yet to risk the social problems of speaking to more fluent class-mates. Or a number of Samoan pupils participating in an interschool speech competition for Pacific Islanders who spoke eloquently in English about problems of identity (those more recent arrivals, who spoke in Samoan, had other topics to talk about). Or a number of well-educated Samoans, intellectuals with the highest command of English, who said they could not easily participate in public life in Samoan.

***There is an increasing number of Samoans born in New Zealand with limited knowledge of Samoan or none at all.***

There are two main forces working for Samoan language maintenance in New Zealand. One is the connection with Samoa: new arrivals or return visits provide opportunities to increase and enrich knowledge and use of the language. The second is the church, which has become the major structure for maintenance of the Samoan community and the main focus of Samoan social and cultural life in New Zealand. While there has been some falling away from the nearly 100% figure of church membership in Samoa (particularly in the villages), I was told that about 70-80% of Samoans remain active church members in New Zealand. While some Samoans belong to Pacific Island churches, which use English in some of their services, most belong to churches of various denominations that use Samoan in services, sermons and for all the other religious, educational and social activities associated with the churches. For many families, religious life includes not just attending church and week-day classes and choir practices but also daily evening services in the home, where reading from the Bible in Samoan is a central function.

***Increasingly, Samoans in New Zealand have come to recognise that there is a threat of language loss and have started to work against it.***

But there is clear evidence that these forces alone have not been enough to prevent the start of a shift from Samoan to English. Increasingly, Samoans in New Zealand have come to recognise that there is a threat of language loss and have started to work against it. I learned of a number of parents who were taking individual steps: by insisting on use of Samoan in the home, by making the Bible reading a regular activity, by arranging visits to Samoa. But others are uncertain, wondering whether it is not wiser to go along with the flow towards English. It is important therefore to spell out the reasons for aiming at Samoan-English bilingualism in New Zealand.

## A rationale for Samoan-English bilingualism in New Zealand

Ever since the Tower of Babel, the world has had many languages, but while there are some disadvantages in this, such as difficulties of communication, there are advantages, the most important of which is the possibility of using one's own language to keep traditional culture and identity alive and clear.

The pull of major world languages like English is strong and there are few people who would be so ostrich-like as to suggest that one should not do one's best to master such a language, but any group that acquires English by giving up its own language runs a very serious risk of losing its culture, identity and traditional values as well.

***Individual efforts at language maintenance are seldom successful, unless they are supported by community action.***

Samoans coming to New Zealand are naturally tempted to speak only English with their children, for they recognise the importance of English to education and work. This has a number of damaging effects. First, because newly arrived Samoans do not themselves speak good English, they expose their children to an impoverished linguistic environment. All evidence shows that it is the richness of the linguistic environment that counts and not the specific language: it is better, for the child's cognitive and linguistic development, to surround him or her with good and rich Samoan than with broken English. There will be plenty of opportunity for the learning of English.

Second, by denying their children enrichment in Samoan, they are at the same time preventing them from learning their own traditional cultural and social values: they are cutting them off from their background and making it much harder for them to make connections with Samoa and their family there.

Third, when they speak broken English to their children, they show themselves in their worst light, as unsophisticated new immigrants, rather than showing the strength and richness of their control of their own culture and language. In a statement made at a time when the Hebrew language was no longer being spoken as a mother tongue, the Talmud asserted that, when a father did not teach Hebrew to his child, it was as though he were burying him. Children who do not know the language of their own people, who cannot read the Bible in their own language, are cast adrift, with no way of grasping their identity.

These and similar arguments are leading many Samoans in New Zealand to try to stem the tide of language shift. But, as research has shown, individual efforts at language maintenance are seldom successful, unless they are supported by community action. And this is starting, as I will detail in the next section.

## Educational activity for Samoan language maintenance

In a rather striking image that was proposed, I was told, by a Samoan woman to a government minister, the language maintenance effort may be compared to a fish with a head, a tail and a body. The head is provided by the leadership of Samoan religious and intellectual leaders: a number of younger church ministers, academic leaders (Samoans have just been appointed to important chairs at Auckland and Canterbury Universities and an appointment to a lectureship in Samoan language has been advertised at Victoria University), government officials. The existence of this group, with its understanding of the requirements of both modern and traditional life, is obviously a key element in developing a specifically New Zealand Samoan bilingualism and culture.

The tail too has recently begun to flap, with the start of a significant number of *a oga amata* or Samoan language pre-school programs. While in Samoa there is a strong tradition of preschool religious education, pre-school secular programs are more recent. For this and many other reasons there has been little involvement of Pacific Island children in formal preschool programs. With the initiative of New Zealand educated intellectuals and of younger church ministers and their wives, however, there have been recent efforts to change this situation and provide pre-school programs. Following the successful experience over the last few years of the Maori *kohanga reo* (language nests), a number of *a oga amata* (Samoan language nests) have been established recently, the earliest in Tokaroa and others in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

Typically, these language nests are in a church or a school building. In some cases, the leadership is provided by a pastor's wife, adapting to the New Zealand conditions with an established concern of the role of early childhood education. In some cases, too, the persons in charge have had training in Samoa in the pre-school movement: they are then equipped with the skills, the songs, the dances, the other material and knowledge required for a successful preschool program. In other cases, the people in charge are Island-trained primary school teachers. In addition, parents and grandparents are involved, sometimes being trained and paid through the Access program.

I am not sure how many programs there are, for until now there has been no central government funding nor formal recognition; I visited four and was told of at least half a dozen other Samoan programs. Their start shows evidence (as did the similar start of the Maori language nests) of strong community support, for not just inertia but many specific problems had to be overcome: finding space and teachers, the lack of finance, the difficulties of working parents without time to take children to the nests, the long distances from home to the program site and the lack of material. However, the existence of the present nests and the strong community support (I was present at a most impressive fundraising evening for one nest) show the importance attached to this aspect of language maintenance.

***The New Zealand school gives the most minimal recognition to the language and culture of a large group of its pupils.***

The central concern of the nests I visited was to provide, in Samoan, preparation for school. Samoan was the language of instruction and the enrichment of Samoan and the cognitive, conceptual and physical development of the children went hand in hand.

There have been two recent developments that augur well for the continued strength of the language nests. A grant from the Van Leer Foundation will, it is hoped, develop a home-based intervention program for early childhood education for Pacific Island communities in New Zealand. While there was some concern expressed at the full community understanding of the project, it hopes to be able to provide important support at a critical stage in the development of pre-school activities.

More striking has been a government decision, in the midst of a period of tight educational budgets, to allocate over $400,000 for the rest of this fiscal year and over $900,00 for the next to direct support of Pacific Island language nests. These funds will provide vital practical and moral support to existing programs and encourage the realisation of plans to establish a number of new ones. The tail, then, looks to be in good shape.

There remains, as the Samoan woman sagely reminded the Government, the question of the body, namely Samoan programs in elementary and secondary schools. Here, existing activities are much less well established and much remains to be done. Samoan is recognised as a possible subject for the sixth-form certificate, but not for the fifth-form certificate which essentially defines the high school syllabus. It is taught in at least two schools in sixth forms; there are some classes at other levels; there is some use of Samoan in English as Second Language classes in elementary schools. There are Samoan culture groups in a number of schools. But, essentially, one might say, there is no flesh on the body; the New Zealand school gives the most minimal recognition to the language and culture of a large group of its pupils. This rejection by the school is clearly part of the reason that the pupils themselves reject school; it is tragically ironic that a culture with such a high value for education should have such a small proportion of its children continuing beyond the fifth form.

There has been recognition of the problem; a course on Pacific Island education, meeting at the end of June 1988, called for urgent steps to develop national syllabuses for Pacific Island languages, including prescriptions for fifth and sixth form certificate courses. There are people capable of developing these courses; there are teachers qualified (if not equipped with the correct certificates) to teach them; there are pupils waiting to study in them, and there is a community whose fate is tied up in the decision.

The teachers participating in the course set out an excellent rationale for the teaching of Samoan languages, which I fully endorse. It is crucially important, I am convinced, that the New Zealand educational system move as fast as possible to the recognition of the relevance and value of teaching Samoan.

## Some specific issues: the place of minority groups in 'tomorrow's schools'

One of the important features of the planned reform of education administration in New Zealand is the provision for direct local parental control of schools. This will have clear advantages for some groups, by assuring much more responsiveness to local needs. In my report last year on Maori-English bilingual education, I argued for alternative school models and for local control of schools. In the case of the Maori bilingual schools I visited last year, I expect that the changes will be for the better.

In the Pacific Island case, the results will not automatically be satisfactory, for there is a strong tendency for Pacific Islanders to feel distanced from school administration and, even when in the majority, to prefer a low profile. Active steps will need to be taken to ensure that groups like the Samoan community find an appropriate way to be involved in the new structures.

There will also be a need to consider carefully the place of appropriate Samoan educational officers in the new administrative structure. Without entering into details, the proposed structure will need to find a place for the Samoan advisors who, at national and regional levels, are providing essential leadership and support for programs like

Samoan language maintenance. It would make sense for them to be represented both in the Ministry and the Review and Audit Agency. The Ministry will need officers fully qualified to assist in setting those parts of national curriculum objectives that are relevant to minority language groups and of overseeing the contracted curriculum development and of advising on the protection of language minority concerns in school charters. The Review and Audit Agency will need team members with appropriate linguistic, cultural and professional qualifications to assure the fulfilment of equal educational opportunity goals with respect to language minority groups. In addition, the schools themselves will need qualified and effective advisers if they are to deal effectively with the special problems of Samoan children and partners.

***All evidence shows that it is the richness of the linguistic environment that counts and not the specific language***

In the complexity of the transition to the new system, considerable care will need to be taken not to damage such existing initiatives, as yet far from established, as the activities for Samoan language maintenance described in his report and to make the full provision needed for their continuation. The development of a Samoan language syllabus sets some special problems that have been clearly identified by the group referred to earlier. Usually, in a school subject, one assumes that all students in a given academic level start at more or less the same level and move at a more or less similar pace through a syllabus. We expect, in other words, that all students start learning a foreign language at the same time, in the third form; in a proposed syllabus for Spanish, for instance, it is assumed that level 1 will be accomplished in the three years from forms 3 to 5, level 2 in the sixth form and level 3 in the seventh. In the case of Samoan, however, one can expect to find in each form students with quite different language backgrounds: some with no experience, some with some home language use and some with formal education. In a Samoan sixth form class, for instance, I observed some children who were absolute beginners and others who, having arrived recently from Samoa, were capable of working at quite advanced levels. The syllabus will set very special demands then for flexibility; its development will call on very special skills and understanding; teacher training and certification.

There is available a valuable pool of fluent speakers of Samoan with formal training as teachers. These teachers, trained in Samoa, often need further training to suit them to the special conditions of teaching in New Zealand schools, but it is both inefficient and insensitive to assume they need to be retrained. Various models of on-site and in-service training are likely to be both more efficient and more effective.

## A commendation and some recommendations

It would not be appropriate to start without commending the efforts to date of the Samoan community, of the Government and of the education officers and schools involved, in the present efforts to assure Samoan language maintenance in New Zealand.

These recommendations simply focus on how existing activities might be maintained and strengthened:

> continue support for the language nests, by the new grants, which should go as directly as possible to the programs themselves,
> encourage local autonomy, recognise Samoan pre-school staff training, develop appropriate pre and in-service career training for new and existing staff,
>
> implement as a matter of urgency the recommendations of the Pacific Island Languages Syllabus Development group, establish a committee and provide funds for syllabus development; recognise Samoan (and, as appropriate, other Pacific Island languages) for the School Certificate; establish national fifth and sixth form course statements,
>
> encourage the teaching of Samoan in all schools where there is a reasonable number of prospective pupils, and
>
> assure continued representation of appropriately qualified Samoan staff in the Ministry and the Review and Evaluation Unit and provide for schools to receive advice on the education of Samoan children.

*Professor Bernard Spolsky's professional interests lie in the areas of bilingual education and language and he has published widely on these topics. New Zealand born, he works at Israel's Bar Illan University specialising in the Hebrew language, but retains his interests in bilingual education in New Zealand.*

# STUDENT OPINIONS OF A FRENCH LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

### by Michael Berthold

In 1985 Benowa State High School on the Gold Coast, Queensland, launched a French Immersion Program. Initially this program was envisaged simply as a one-year enrichment program for the more talented students entering high school. During that first year however, the potential of the program became evident to students, parents and teachers.

Due to parental request, the Program developed into a partial late immersion style program covering the first three years of secondary school with five core subjects (60% of the school timetable) being taught entirely in French. These subjects were mathematics, science, physical education, social science and French. The students were to complete approximately 1,600 hours of lessons in French during the three years. A more detailed description of the experiment was published in the first edition of *Babel* for 1990.

Towards the end of 1988, after four years of the experiment, I surveyed the students who had taken part in the program, those who had completed it and those who had withdrawn at various stages. The 29 question, 6 page survey covered three main aspects of the experiment:

- reasons for joining the French Immersion Program
- reasons for remaining in or leaving the Program
- opinions about their French Immersion experiences.

The survey was carried out on current and former students and the results have been tabulated with respect to the groups involved. The Year 11 respondents were the group who began the experiment in 1985 and had the most exposure to the system and the most variation in subjects and teachers (six). The Year 8 group were those in their first year of Immersion and had only experienced two teachers.

The first two questions concerned the students' reasons for volunteering for the course. The students were presented with a choice of 23 possible answers, plus space to add any others which might have applied to them.

---

**1 Why did you choose to join the French Immersion (FI) class?**

---

Read through the list of possible reasons and indicate how relevant each reason was to you by writing 1,2 or 3 for each reason.

***1 = very relevant***
***(the reason applied strongly to me)***
***2 = relevant***
***3 = irrelevant (the reason didn't apply to me)***

*1 My parents encouraged me.*
*2 I wanted to study French at university.*
*3 I thought a knowledge of the language would help me to get a good job.*
*4 I wanted to be able to travel overseas.*
*5 I thought studying French would help my English.*
*6 I thought it would help me to communicate with my family.*
*7 I wanted to enjoy literature.*
*8 I just went along with friends who wanted to join the FI class.*
*9 I thought it would assist me in obtaining a better overall score for my Junior or Senior Certificate.*
*10 French was recommended for a future tertiary course.*
*11 I wanted to be able to speak to people whose native language I was learning.*
*12 I thought it would be intellectually challenging and therefore interesting or satisfying.*
*13 I thought it would give me an appreciation of my own culture and that of others.*
*14 A teacher or guidance officer advised me to do the FI course.*
*15 I wanted to be able to read magazines and newspapers in French.*
*16 I had studied a foreign language in primary school and liked it.*
*17 French is spoken in my home.*
*18 I intended to use French in my future career.*
*19 I liked the idea of being in a class that was 'different'.*
*20 I thought that it would be an honour to be chosen for this class.*
*21 I thought that I would gain prestige or importance by being in the FI class.*

22 *I expected to have only good teachers.*
23 *I expected to be in a class where all of the pupils wanted to work.*

*OTHER REASONS? PLEASE LIST.*

---

**2 From the above list, write down the numbers of the 3 reasons that were the most important or relevant for your joining the FI class in the first place.**

---

In question 1 the students were to mark all of the responses which were appropriate to them, and in question 2 they were to mark the three most important or relevant reasons. In assessing the frequency of responses for the four classes, only seven featured significantly, namely:

3 *I thought a knowledge of the language would help me to get a job.*
4 *I wanted to be able to travel overseas.*
9 *I thought it would assist me in obtaining a better overall score for my Junior or Senior Certificate.*
11 *I wanted to be able to speak to people whose native language I was going to learn.*
12 *I thought it would be intellectually challenging and therefore interesting or satisfying.*
19 *I liked the idea of being in a class that was 'different'.*
23 *I expected to be in a class where all of the pupils wanted to work.*

The pattern of the frequency of responses varied slightly from year to year, though there was a strong commonality. (The figures with a slash between them, such as 3/4, represent an equal ranking for both responses.)

| | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mode of all responses | 9, 3/4 | 9/12, 19/23 | 12, 23, 11 | 12, 4/23 |
| Mode of 3 main responses | 9, 3, 12 | 9/12, 4 | 12/23, 11 | 12, 4/9/23 |

Question 3 examined their reasons for staying in the program.

---

**3 Again from the list in Question (1), list the 3 most important or relevant reasons for your decision to CONTINUE in the FI course. (This question is only for those students who are still in the FI course, or who stayed with it until the end of Year 10.)**

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The responses were remarkably similar, but with two additional reasons.

2 *I wanted to study French at university.*

22 *I expected to have only good teachers.*

| | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mode of 3 main responses | 9/4, 12/23 | 9/4, 12/23 | 9/1, 23/2 | 12/22/23 |

Questions 4 to 8 referred to the students who had withdrawn from the program. Unfortunately, in one sense, there were too few students in this category to produce reliable data and those who did reply exhibited a wide range of reasons such as: I was advised to leave the program by the teachers; I was performing badly; I just didn't like French; I didn't like feeling different from other students in the school.

Although these students had left the program, quite a few had continued with their studies of French through the traditional French classes.

When asked:

10. *In which order would you list your language skills – from 1 (strongest) to 4 (weakest).*

LISTENING SPEAKING READING WRITING

The four groups perceived their acquisition of the four language skills differently, but there was one common thread. All four groups stated that speaking was their strongest or second strongest area of competence. These students exhibited a competence and a confidence to express themselves orally in French, something that many language students lack even after prolonged study of a language through traditional approaches. The students rated their skills as follows:

| | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongest | R | R | S | L |
| | S | S | L | S |
| | L | W | R | R |
| Weakest | W | L | W | W |

S = speaking, L = listening, R = reading, W = writing

When the students were asked to evaluate the difficulty of each subject taught in French, the different classes exhibited a wide range of opinions. Not only did each class express different views of the difficulties at the same year level, but they also modified their views from year to year. The following table ranks the subjects in decreasing order of perceived difficulty. The vertical columns represent the subject year level and how the students ranked the subjects which they had done at that year level.

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**11 Indicate the subjects where you found the greatest difficulty in coping with the subject through to the easiest. 1 (most difficult) through to 5 (least difficult). Do this for each year that you have been in the FI course. List in order of difficulty.**

| | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year 8 opinions | Ma | | | most difficult |
| | Sc | | | |
| | Fr | | | |
| | LS | | | |
| | PE | | | least difficult |
| Year 9 opinions | LS | LS | | most difficult |
| | Fr | Fr | | |
| | Sc | Sc | | |
| | Ma | Ma | | |
| | PE | PE | | least difficult |
| Year 10 opinions | *Sc | Ma | Fr | most difficult |
| | *Ma | Fr | *Ma | |
| | Fr | Sc | *Sc | |
| | LS | LS | Hi | |
| | PE | PE | PE | least difficult |
| Year 11 opinions | Ma | Fr | Hi | most difficult |
| | Fr | Sc | Sc | |
| | Sc | LS | *Fr | |
| | | Ma | *Ma | |
| | | PE | PE | least difficult |

Ma = Mathematics
Sc = Science
Fr = French
LS = Living in Society (Social Sciences)
PE = Physical Education
Hi = History
* = Equal rankings

When the above rankings were cross referenced with the students' degree of satisfaction with the teaching of each subject, a strong correlation was found between the teacher of a subject, the perceived difficulty and the satisfaction of the students.

The human factor plays a significant role in the successful teaching of the relevant subjects and in student motivation. The role of the Immersion teacher is critical to the success of the Programbecause it depends upon his/her ability to communicate the subject content through a foreign language. This communicative ability is most critical at the Year 8 level where the students arrive in class with no knowledge of the language of instruction and begin their study of certain subjects uniquely in the foreign language. Progressively, as the students acquire a competence in the language, this communicative role becomes less critical, although it remains an essential skill of the immersion teacher.

The students were asked if any subjects should be removed from the course. The common opinion was strongly 'NO', with a significant difference in response for the Year 8 group, in which almost one third of the students recommended the dropping of either Maths or Science. This response was due to their dissatisfaction with a certain teacher who was unable to successfully communicate with the students and thus they felt strongly that their learning had been significantly hindered in the subjects taught by him. Subsequently, that teacher was removed from the program.

| | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| % subjects to be retained | 68.2% | 86.7% | 82.4% | 81.8% |

One of the most positive aspects of the survey was the students' responses to a series of questions relating to their satisfaction with the program in general. They were asked to respond whether:

a they were pleased that they had taken the course,
b they would do it again if given the opportunity,
c they would recommend it to others.

The following figures highlight their degree of satisfaction. It must be remembered that these figures also included those who had left the program for one reason or another.

| | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| YES pleased with the program | 91.3% | 94.8% | 94.1% | 84.0% |
| YES would do it again | 91.3% | 86.7% | 82.4% | 81.8% |
| YES would recommend the program | 82.6% | 86.7% | 87.5% | 91.7% |

One of the negative aspects of the survey was that the majority of students felt that they had fallen behind to some extent in the subjects studied in French in respect to the other classes who had done their studies in English. It was interesting to note that the Year 11 students who had finished the program the previous year had one of the lowest rates in this area (54.5%). They were the only ones really competent to make this assessment as they had entered the normal stream at the beginning of Year 11 and were able to compare themselves with students who had never been in the immersion program.

| | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fallen behind to some extent | 68.4% | 50.0% | 75.0% | 54.5% |

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As a corollary to this question, another two questions were posed to the Year 11 students only.

**18 a For those of you in Year 11, do you feel that you were disadvantaged in any subjects in Year 11 because of having done your previous studies in French?**

**b If so, which subjects and by how much? (use the 1 to 5 scale from the previous question).**

***Scale:***
***1 = very much***
***2 = a lot***
***3 = enough***
***4 = little***
***5 = none***

The students replied a resounding 'NO' ..72.7%. Of those who replied 'YES', 67% cited science at an average score of 4.25 (little to none) and 33% claimed a disadvantage in mathematics of 3 (enough). This translated in real terms to only 7.8% of students surveyed who felt that their maths had suffered as a consequence of French Immersion, with 25.6% believing their science had been very little affected and the remainder believing that they had not suffered at all.

As a postscript to this point, these students have now completed Year 12 and the school achieved the best ever results at this level in the school's history. Of the six students who achieved 990 in their TE Score (Tertiary Entrance Score – 990 being the maximum possible score), five were former French Immersion students.

As voluntary guinea pigs in an educational linguistic experiment, these students needed support to enable them to deal with and overcome the myriad difficulties and problems as they arose, and to give them the confidence to remain in the class, doing a task far more difficult than the other students in the school. These students had voluntarily taken on a far greater workload than they needed to.

When asked:

**17 How much support did you feel that you received from the following? Use the 1-5 scale below.**

***Scale:***
***1 = very much***
***2 = a lot***
***3 = enough***
***4 = little***
***5 = none***

*A FI teachers*
*B Other teachers*
*C Community in general*
*D Other students in the school*
*E School administration*
*F Family*
*G Classmates*

They responded as follows

| Year 8 | | Year 9 | | Year 10 | | Year 11 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family | 1.8 | Family | 1.9 | Family | 1.8 | Family | 1.5 |
| Classmates | 2.3 | FI teachers | 2.1 | FI teachers | 1.8 | FI teachers | 1.6 |
| FI teachers | 2.5 | Classmates | 2.1 | Classmates | 3.0 | Classmates | 2.2 |
| Community | 3.5 | Administration | 2.9 | Administration | 3.4 | Administration | 2.5 |
| Administration | 3.0 | Community | 3.6 | Other teachers | 3.0 | Other teachers | 2.9 |
| Other teachers | 3.9 | Other teachers | 3.4 | Community | 3.8 | Community | 3.0 |
| Other students | 4.4 | Other students | 4.4 | Other students | 4.5 | Other students | 4.0 |

When the total responses are calculated the rank order is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Family | 1.8 |
| FI teachers | 2.1 |
| Classmates | 2.4 |
| Administration | 3.2 |
| Community | 3.4 |
| Other teachers | 3.5 |
| Other students | 4.3 |

Two very relevant points are highlighted by these results:

1 *The support felt by the students from their families, French Immersion teachers and their classmates, and*

2 *The almost total lack of support from the other students in the school.*

These results were backed up by further questioning.

**21 Do/Did you feel rejected/isolated by the other students in the school because of being in a French Immersion class?**

**22 Do you feel that you developed a closer relationship with your French Immersion teachers (in general) than with your other teachers?**

| | | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21** | YES – isolated/rejected | 65.2% | 64.3% | 80.0% | 90.9% |
| **22** | YES – closer relationship | 82.6% | 87.5% | 80.0% | 81.8% |

The isolation/rejection sensed particularly by the first two Immersion classes had its positive and negative aspects. On the negative side, the students had to tolerate a great deal of criticism, teasing and even abuse by certain elements in the school. As the program developed over the years and the Immersion students had more contact with the other students in the school through mixed classes and sport, this discrimination tended to decrease and subsequent classes have felt this antipathy much less. This progressive decrease can be seen in the above figures and the trend has continued since 1988, according to information obtained through discussions with the subsequent classes.

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The positive side of the discrimination was the development of a very strong class spirit among the immersion students. They had to rely much more upon one another, and to give each other support. They also realised that the success of the Program depended upon their efforts and they did not let the Program, or themselves, down.

The role of the family and the French Immersion teachers was critical to the continuation of the students. If these two groups could not provide the necessary support, then there would have been very little incentive or encouragement for the students to continue. The fact that they recognised this support and sensed a closer kinship with their Immersion teachers helped them through the difficult times – and difficult times there were, for all of the students.

One criticism constantly levelled against the Immersion Program was that it was 'elitist'. This word was used in a derogatory tone. There were also comments that being a member of an Immersion class conferred some type of 'prestige' upon the student and that would make them into snobs. The students found that they were not only feeling rejected by certain other students in the school, but also by adults who for one reason or another resented the concept of an 'elitist' group, or considered such an emphasis on languages a waste of time and resources. To find the students' attitude toward their membership of these classes they were asked:

**19 Do you feel a certain pride in being a member of the FI program?**

**23 Has being a member of a FI class given you a feeling of prestige?**

| | | | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **19** | Pride | YES | 73.9% | 66.7% | 73.3% | 80.0% |
| **23** | Prestige | YES | 31.8% | 8.3% | 20.0% | 50.0% |

There is ample evidence of pride in what they were doing, but little sense of prestige. The Year 11 group, being the initial group, had a heightened sense of prestige as they saw themselves as an integral part of an innovative educational experiment whose success depended very much upon them. If they had failed, then the Program would not have continued and developed. For them there was pride in being, to our knowledge, the first and only state secondary school language Immersion Program, rather than a type of language maintenance program which had previously existed. This was a program basically for anglophones.

The students did not always find the going easy. When asked:

**20 Did you, at any time, consider leaving the FI class?**

They replied:

| | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| YES | 43.5% | 60.0% | 46.7% | 63.6% |

The final questions referred to their future plans and what role French would play in them.

**28 Do you intend using French in your future career or studies?**

**29 Do you intend studying French at university?**

| | | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **28** | YES | 13.0% | 33.3% | 26.7% | 27.3% |
| | NO | 0.0% | 20.0% | 13.3% | 18.2% |
| | UNSURE | 87.0% | 46.7% | 60.0% | 54.5% |
| **29** | YES | 23.8% | 7.7% | 20.0% | 9.1% |
| | NO | 23.8% | 23.1% | 33.3% | 63.6% |
| | UNSURE | 52.4% | 69.2% | 46.7% | 27.3% |

This survey, while clarifying a number of questions about the motivation, reasons for enroling, and attitudes towards the program and the teachers, leaves a vast field of research to be done which could assist in the introduction of similar programs elsewhere in Queensland and throughout Australia. I shall leave the last word to the students.

***'I feel sufficient satisfaction in my progress at the end of Years 8, 9 and 10 as far as my academic achievements went. However, I definitely felt socially outcast by many other students within the school.' [Year 11, age 15]***

***'I feel that while the FI is an excellent opportunity for academic achievement and for improving language skills, it could be improved in some ways. The program has fostered the development of good relationships with students and teachers and by so doing has increased self esteem in students.' [Year 11, age 16]***

***'I liked this course and it has helped me in my academic studies. Nothing beats competing with a brain like "K". The course has adjusted me to accept defeat, which usually I never had.' [Year 11, age 16 ]***

***'The only problem with the class is that some people get sick of being with each other for 3 years, but overall I feel that it has been a success. And if you are prepared to work hard, any above average student should be able to handle it.' [Year 10, age 15]***

***'I think the course is great! It has taught me heaps and I am really glad that I took it.' [Year 9 , age14 ]***

***'The French Immersion Program has developed my motivation and organisation. I needed a challenge to get me used to high school.' [Year 9, age 14]***

***'I get a lot of support from Mr X and Mrs Y (FI teachers). I think without support, especially from teachers, this course would be a failure.' [Year 9, age 14]***

***'I think it is great. It should be started in more schools and there should be more advertising about it because a lot of people don't know about it. It is great to learn another language even if you don't plan to use it out of school.' [Year 8, age 13]***

***'I like it!' [Year 8, age 12]***

*Mr Michael Berthold is the initiator of the French Immersion Program at Benowa State High School and a teacher of maths, science, French, Living in Society and history in the program during its first five years*

# PIJIN LONG MELANISA TEDE – MELANESIAN PIDGIN TODAY

**by Terry Crowley**

***Plis yu no mas karem basket i kam insaed long stoa.***

***No askem kaon long ples ia.***

***Mifala i gat kava blong salem long nakamal. Wan sel, nokaot!***

If you were to stroll the streets of Vila and look beyond the shop front signs aimed at the foreign dollar, these are the kinds of signs you will come across. The first asks customers not to bring bags into the shop. The second informs customers that all sales are cash on the knocker. And the last one, which you would normally find by a lighted kerosene lamp or a diesel wick hung by the roadside, tells people that inside somebody's back yard you will find a makeshift – but properly licensed – bar selling kava and that in this case, you only need one coconut shell of the liquid to set you floating.

These signs are in Bislama, the language that the constitution of Vanuatu declares to be the 'national language' of the country and along with English and French, one of the three 'official languages'. Being an official language means that it is one of the three languages in which ni-Vanuatu (as citizens of Vanuatu call themselves) can expect to receive the services of the government. It would in fact be rare for a ni-Vanuatu to choose English or French when dealing with civil servants. You would almost invariably buy a postage stamp, query your water bill, renew your vehicle registration, file a complaint with the police, or answer charges in court in Bislama.

This is not to say that people in Vanuatu don't speak English or French. Almost all school age children in Vanuatu today spend six years at primary school, in which either of the two languages is the sole medium of instruction. But it is Bislama (or one of the hundred odd local languages) that people generally feel most comfortable speaking. English and French are the languages of formality. Bislama is the language of informality and friendship, while the local languages are the languages that tie local communities together as distinct from other local communities.

As a language, Bislama has a vocabulary that derives predominantly from English, but with a healthy infusion also of words from some of the local languages, as well as French. Thus, while a 'cow' is a *buluk* (from the English word 'bullock'), a 'banyan tree' is a *nabangga* (from a word that is found in a number of local languages) and a 'grapefruit' is a *pamplimus* (from French pamplemousse). As a pidgin language, its structure is relatively easy for the newcomer to acquire, though it is certainly much more than simplified or broken English, as some native speakers of English might like to believe. Many aspects of its structure are in fact clearly derivable from Melanesian rather than European structural patterns.

***Bislama was readily settled on as the national language as a way of avoiding the divisive choice between English and French***

It is essentially one language that is spoken by about 140,000 people in Vanuatu, by about twice that number in neighbouring Solomon Islands, and by a couple of a million in Papua New Guinea. It is known by different names in each of these three countries. So, people will say that they speak Tok Pisin (or simply Pisin) in Papua New Guinea, while they speak Pijin in the Solomon Islands, and Bislama in Vanuatu. Being the largest language in the Pacific, Melanesian Pidgin (as we can refer to it generically) is not completely uniform. Papua New Guineans, Solomon Islanders and ni-Vanuatu can easily recognise each other when they speak the same language from the many local words, grammatical constructions and intonation patterns that characterise each variety.

By and large, however, mutual intelligibility is not impaired by these differences.

What is perhaps more significant are the differences in the way the three languages are used in each country. In Vanuatu, the Prime Minister's speech to the nation on Independence Day is always in Bislama. In Papua New Guinea, it is almost always in English. Public servants in Port Moresby answering the phone will speak in English while in Vila, they speak in Bislama. In Honiara, even the signs asking people to leave their bags outside before they go into a shop are almost always in English rather than Pijin, whereas in Vanuatu they are nearly always in Bislama. In Papua New Guinea, you will find a mixture, with some stores putting these signs up in English, some stores in Tok Pisin and some stores perhaps in both languages.

Some of the reasons for this are not too difficult to find. In Vanuatu, you cannot tell by looking at somebody whether they have been to an English-medium school or a French-medium school and the only language that you can assume you have in common with somebody is Bislama. In fact, the division between 'anglophones' and 'francophones' came to represent a major political dichotomy in the country just before and after independence and Bislama was readily settled on as the national language as a way of avoiding the divisive choice between English and French.

***Despite being the national language in Vanuatu, Bislama is still really a kind of second class national language***

In Papua New Guinea, however, there are actually two competing lingua francas apart from English – Tok Pisin (spoken mostly in the area of what was originally known as 'New Guinea') and Hiri Motu (spoken in parts of what was originally known as 'Papua'). Around the time of independence in Papua New Guinea in 1975, the question of a national language also raged as it did in Vanuatu in the lead-up to their independence in 1980. In Papua New Guinea, both Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu had their proponents and it was English that won out as the compromise national language. (The constitution in the end trickily avoided saying what the national language was, but the fact that the constitution was made available at the time only in English suggested that it wasn't Tok Pisin or Hiri Motu!)

Unlike elsewhere in Melanesia, the Solomon Islands did not have a controversy over the status of Pijin at the national level at its independence in 1978. People in most parts of the country use Pijin in their everyday lives in much the same way that people do in Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea, but when it comes to anything 'official', Pijin seems to give way fairly rapidly and consistently to English. Of all the three countries, Melanesian Pidgin undoubtedly has lowest status and narrowest range of uses in the Solomon Islands. The reasons for this are not quite so easy to find. Perhaps it was the purely British colonial experience of Solomon Islanders, with a stress on The Queen's English, that left Solomon Islanders with this particular linguistic heritage. Pijin was not the absolute necessity for national unity that it was in Vanuatu. Still, this doesn't really explain why Tok Pisin has more status in Papua New Guinea than Pijin has in Solomon Islands.

But is it worth pointing out that some younger and well educated Solomon Islanders these days are beginning to react against the accepted wisdom about the position of Pijin. There have even been proposals, as part of a constitutional review currently underway in the country, for Pijin to be formally written into the constitution as the national language. The New Testament of the Bible is also currently being translated into Pijin and this may well end up increasing the status of the language in the eyes of the ordinary person in the villages and the towns.

Even in Vanuatu, where Melanesian Pidgin is used most widely and it has been declared to be the national language, it is certainly not a national language in the same sense in which Bahasa Indonesia is the national language of Indonesia, or in which French is the national language of France. To use a new idiom, Bislama could almost be described as a Clayton's national language. While people use it verbally as a national language, when it comes to the written language, it is definitely English and French which predominate. While civil servants will conduct meetings in Bislama, the minutes will probably be in English or French (and of these two, it is English that is more likely to be used these days, rather than French). Parliament normally debates in Bislama, but the written laws the members debate are in English and French and the summarised records of proceedings are also in both English and French only.

There are several explanations for this. One is that with English and French being the languages in which children are taught to read and write at school, it is simply easier for people to use these languages in this mode rather than Bislama, despite the fact that they feel much more comfortable speaking Bislama. Another consideration is that English and French are seen as being much more 'powerful' languages than Bislama. They are the languages in which people are used to seeing books and movies and which give people access to higher education and highly paid jobs that require contact with other countries. So, despite being the national language in Vanuatu, Bislama is still really a kind of second class national language. The same kinds of attitudes also hold in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands vis-a-vis spoken Pidgin and written English.

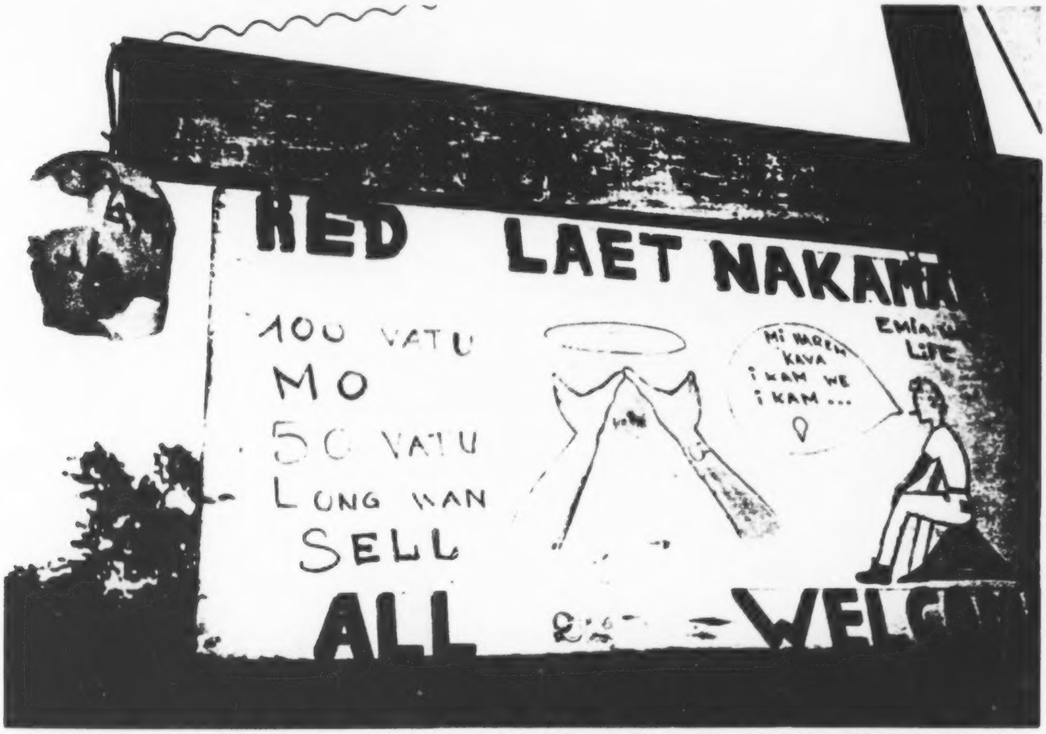
This second class status for Melanesian Pidgin has had a number of unfortunate side effects on the way the language is being used today. As I have already mentioned, some younger Melanesians are increasingly coming to see the importance of Pidgin as a way of expressing a Melanesian identity, as distinct from an identity as colonial subjects speaking a European language. Pidgin is increasingly coming to be seen in some quarters as a genuine Melanesian language, with this being the language through which national cultures will crystallise rather than English.

***Younger Melanesians are increasingly coming to see the importance of Pidgin as a way of expressing a Melanesian identity***

How do we refer to a virus in Bislama, to intercropping, or to clear-felling of forests and the subsequent erosion that this produces?

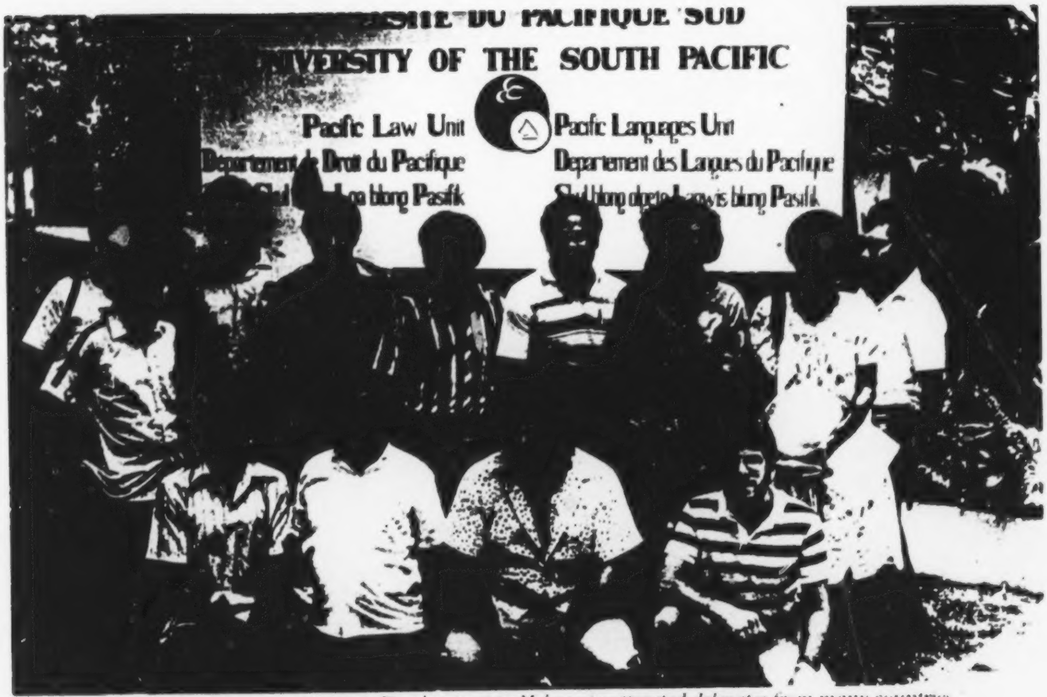
What tends to happen in the case of Melanesian Pidgin is that people get a little lazy. The people who know what words like 'virus', 'intercropping', 'clear-felling' and 'erosion' mean are of course those people who have been relatively well educated and whose education has been in English (or perhaps French). For these people, it is easiest simply to incorporate these words directly into Melanesian Pidgin, with some phonetic (as well as orthographic) adaptation to make them look and sound like Melanesian Pidgin words. Hence: *vairus, intakroping, kliafeling, erosen.*

But this does not necessarily help people in the villages in the outer islands if they do not already have the level of English that would tell them what the cognate forms of these words in English actually mean. In fact, if we could assume that village people would automatically know what these words mean, then there would be no point trying to put material across in melanesian Pidgin in the first place! There is a real danger that in using this kind of *flas toktok* 'magniloquence', the educated elite will communicate nothing other than that they speak English much better than the people in their villages back 'home'. Perhaps an



*'Advertising sign outside a kava bar uses both Bislama and English, two of Vanuatu's three national languages.'*

People are coming more and more to see the need to use Pidgin effectively as a way of communicating information of all kinds to people at all levels of society. But as soon as people try to talk about AIDS prevention, the planting of new crops to generate income, the environmental and economic pros and cons of logging and so on, they find that they are using the language for things that it has never been used for in the past.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UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC
Pacific Law Unit
Departement de Droit du Pacifique
Pacific Languages Unit
Departement des Langues du Pacifique

*The 1985 UNESCO Workshop on Language Development in Melanesia attracted delegates from many countries*

even worse danger is that instead of communicating nothing, they will communicate something, but something quite different to what was intended. For instance, one government economic planning document in Vanuatu attempted to translate the English phrase 'total land area' as *totel la eria*. One elderly man in Vanuatu completely misinterpreted this to mean *graon we oli no save yusum long saed blong agrikalja from we totel i stap putum eg long hem*, ie 'land unsuited to agriculture because it is used by turtles for laying eggs'. (The word *totel* in Bislama means 'turtle'.)

There are some countries which, when faced with the same kind of problems in their own national languages, have established special committees to deal with the question of terminology development. Indonesia's Dewan Bahasa is a case in point. Borrowing from historically dominant languages is a case in point. Borrowing from historically dominant languages is just one way of expressing new meanings, but other options include taking existing words and extending their meanings to cover new concepts and taking existing words and compounding them to form new words. In Indonesia, the policy of the Dewan Bahasa is to borrow words (from Dutch) only as a last resort and to utilise the internal resources of the language as far as possible. Thus, the linguistic term 'oral cavity' is expressed in Bahasa Indonesia as *rongga mulut* (literally: hole-mouth), rather than a term derived from Dutch.

Although none of the Melanesian countries has an officially recognised committee of this kind, the use of the internal resources of the language has been happening spontaneously in the language, alongside direct borrowing from English (or French). For instance, some people, when speaking about viruses, use the word *bebet* in Bislama (which comes from the French word *bete* 'beastie'). Originally, this just referred to insects, but has now come to have a new meaning of germs and viruses. I have not yet heard how people might talk about the clear-felling of logs in Bislama, but one logical possibility would be to make up a compound verb *katem finisim*, on the pattern of *kakae finisim* 'devour (food)', *katem klinim* 'clear (bush) by chopping' or *katem spolem* 'chop (something) thereby damaging it'. Compound nouns are also used. Newsreaders talking about missiles, for instance, often use the newly coined word *roket-bom* instead of the direct borrowing *misael*.

These kinds of words and expressions undoubtedly make it easier for lesser educated people to understand information about new things as people are encountering words that are partially familiar and for which the context will hopefully provide enough clues as to the exact meaning. The problem in the case of Melanesian Pidgin is that these processes are not being actively encouraged in any way. This is the kind of work that could be undertaken by national committees (or perhaps even a regional committee) for the development of terminology.

Setting up such a committee would not be too difficult. In fact, in Vanuatu just a few years ago, a *Komiti blong Bislama* did set itself up. It consisted of people whose work regularly involved them in translation work into Bislama and included representatives from the radio station, the local newspaper, the government translation department, the churches and the Pacific Languages Unit of the University of the South Pacific. The committee met regularly and tried to deal with terminology problems in a variety of semantic areas, as well as trying to tackle some of the issues relating to the standardisation of the spelling system. However, the major problem that the committee faced was that it had no official status. They had no way of informing the public of their decisions and the reasons for them.

The request of the committee to the government for official recognition of their work, as well as a request for a small budgetary allocation to allow the results of their deliberations to be disseminated went unanswered. After that, the committee simply stopped meeting and now Vanuatu is back to square one with regard to terminology development.

***Despite the fact that Bislama is the 'national language' of Vanuatu, it is officially banned from schools***

One thing that would be needed if vocabulary development were to be positively encouraged would be access to the formal education system. At the moment, despite the fact that Bislama is the 'national language' of Vanuatu, it is officially banned from schools and students are, in many schools, penalised for speaking it in school hours or on school grounds. (The constitution makes this possible by stating that there are only two 'principle languages of education' in the country ie English and French.)

This makes it extremely difficult at the moment to think of carrying out any meaningful program of language development with regard to Melanesian pidgin, as the most effective way of disseminating vocabulary would be to make the language an examinable subject, perhaps at secondary level, where students would be taught how to read and write in some kind of standardised Bislama, Pijin or Tok Pisin and be examined and graded at the end of the year, along with all other subjects. At the moment, students in Melanesia are taught so that they have good idea of what is good English and what is bad English, but nobody has ever tried to teach them what is good Pidgin and what is bad Pidgin. Thus, it is English which matters, while Pidgin does not.

What is needed here is some kind of political will. While Papua New Guinea has to grapple with the massive problems of balancing the interests of multinational corporations, local landowners and its own national budget, the fact that Tok Pisin does not have an accepted word for 'erosion' does not seem to bother too many people in power. Similarly, the Vanuatu and Solomon Islands governments can see the short-term financial rewards to come from tourist projects, or from logging the forest resources of their islands, but not the longer term problems of people who have only limited access to information because their national languages do not have generally accepted ways of talking about 'clear-felling'.

In fifty years time, will these issues no longer be issues? Will everybody speak such good English that it will no longer be necessary to bother about translating into Melanesian Pidgin? And will the foreign logging companies in the meantime have been able to completely denude and erode large areas of Melanesia because local landowners did not completely understand the documents that they were signing at the time?

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# BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE EASTERN SOUTH PACIFIC: FACT OR MYTH?

### by Francis Mangubhai

In the early seventies, the catch phrase in the South Pacific was 'relevant curriculum'. The 'relevant curriculum' that developed as a result of this educational ferment largely ignored the vernacular languages. Admittedly, official pronouncements referred to the goals of producing (at least) bilingual citizens, but policies and practices militated against such a hope. This article looks at the nature of bilingualism that is to be found in the South Pacific and suggests a direction that some of the countries in the South Pacific might take in order to more truly achieve the goal of bilingualism in their society. Reference will be made only to the eastern South Pacific since the nature of language problems in the western part is more complex.

***Official pronouncements referred to the goals of producing (at least) bilingual citizens, but policies and practices militated against such a hope.***

The history of education in the South Pacific has been the history of Christian education. With the advent of the first missionaries in the South Pacific in the early part of the nineteenth century, literacy was introduced into preliterate societies. The missionaries set up village schools which taught reading and some numeracy. The basic goal of this literate activity was to enable people to read the word of God. The choice of language for teaching literacy was the vernacular, where there was only one language, or one of the more prestigious dialects, as in the case of Fiji.

The rise of these schools and the concomitant growth of local pastor-teachers as Christianity took root resulted in a 'school system' that was church-based, and that used the vernacular language as the medium of instruction.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw an increasingly greater introduction of English in the school curriculum, as the colonial governments began to exert an influence over school systems (Mangubhai 1984). After the Second World War, developmental issues and a developmental orientation led to an increasing demand for a more skilled and educated labour force. It was assumed that development was tied to education through English. The vernacular language simply became a subject, important for cultural reasons but not viewed as contributing to economic development. Within 150 years of contact with the first missionaries, education systems, which began with the use of vernacular, found English firmly entrenched in the system, and at the upper levels of schooling, dominated the curriculum.

The first large scale curriculum development in the South Pacific carried out through UNDP funding focused on English, social science, basic science and two technical subjects – all in English. The neglect of the vernacular was obvious. It cannot be gainsaid that official pronouncements constantly mentioned the importance of the vernacular language, but appropriate educational policies were not devised that would lead to the realisation of these hopes. The emphasis on English, and the corresponding lack of emphasis on the vernacular, has had a detrimental effect on the growth of the vernacular amongst the students, particularly the more urbanized ones.

Nowhere was this neglect more manifest than in the teacher training institutions. Funds were made available, through internal or external sources, for training lecturers in training colleges to become better at training teachers of English – especially training teachers to be more effective with the widely-used Tate Oral English Course, but little attempt was made to put similar resources, or even a fraction of them, into the training of vernacular teacher trainers or teachers. It seemed to be tacitly assumed that if a person spoke the language he or she could teach it effectively.

This relative neglect of the vernacular and the subsequent realization of this neglect is evident from the following comments. The first was made by Professor George Milner of London University and author of a Fijian grammar, in a talk to the Fiji Society in 1981:

> *'There has, however, been so much emphasis on English, and so little on Fijian, for so many years that the consequences are all too obvious. The Fijian people are in danger of being cut off from their roots.'*

Kanwal (1982), a well-known secondary principal in Fiji, in his address to a Headmasters' Seminar said:

> *I must congratulate the Ministry of Education and its energetic Education Officers who are feeling the pulse of time and are fully understanding the need and importance of vernaculars in the school curriculum now.*

The first quote warns of the dangers to the Fijian language of continued emphasis on English in the school system and the corresponding lack of concern for the vernacular language; the second quote suggests some optimism about a change in the attitude towards the vernacular by the educational hierarchy.

A similar concern to Professor Milner's, but to a lesser degree, was evident in Tonga. This concern led the Director of Education in 1982 to propose that English not be introduced until Year 4. Adverse public reaction led to no further development in this area. Parents perceived this move as an attempt to deprive their children of an opportunity to learn English and thus deny them the opportunities for better paid jobs.

What is the language situation in the eastern South Pacific? English is taught in all schools from the very first year of primary. The vernacular is used as a medium of instruction at first. It is also the language in which initial literacy is developed. But the English language exerts a powerful influence. In Fiji, officially, the switch from the vernacular as a medium of instruction to English as the medium of instruction takes place from Year 4. In Tonga and Western Samoa, the switch is made much later in the primary system. At whatever level the switch is made, an increasingly greater amount of English is used in the school system as students go into higher grades, because the source of printed information is in that language. The vernacular becomes a subject, and, in a country like Fiji, not a compulsory subject either.

This emphasis in the school is reflected in the society too – or perhaps it might be more true to say that schools reflect the values held by the society at large. In Kiribati, for example, the English language exerts a strong influence over parents as it is seen primarily as a language of advancement for their children. Parents believe that their children will pick up I-Kiribati naturally but need to be taught the foreign English language (Biribo & Moore 1989). The English language is seen as a key to job opportunities and a more comfortable life.

Parents' attitude towards English in Kiribati is not peculiar to that country. Earlier, mention was made of the reaction of parents to a possible change in language in education policy in Tonga.

As a result of these perceptions about the relative importance of languages, educational policies have tended to state that the learning of one's mother tongue is very important but generally have not done much about it. Little attempt has been made to pursue the findings of research on bilingual education or to set up research projects within the country that would seek to identify the issues involved in making an educational system truly bilingual.

An even more serious omission has been the apparent lack of realisation that initial literacy in the mother tongue is not sufficient and that quality materials are required for post-literacy development. Unlike Topsy, literacy cannot just grow; in fact, there is ample evidence that disuse of literate skills leads to a diminished level of literacy (see, for example, the 1987 issue of *Prospects – a Quarterly Review of Education*). Even in those cases where there has been an acknowledgement that literacy must grow through the provision of appropriate literacy activities, no steps have been taken to provide such activities. The principal reason for this has been that there have been few books written in the vernaculars in the South Pacific; there is no tradition, for example, of writing stories for children (or, for that matter, adults). This has been a serious problem, and attempts to grapple with this situation have not been highly successful for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the difficulty of getting materials published.

***The vernacular becomes a subject, and, in a country like Fiji, not a compulsory subject either.***

Children first learn to read and then later read to learn. If ample materials are not available in the vernacular languages then children cannot read to learn. Their learning has to take place either through the medium of English – since ample books are available in it, if countries are willing to spend money on this resource – or alternatively, the teacher processes knowledge (written in English) and then transmits it through the vernacular to the students, thus creating a teacher-dependent learning system. While there is therefore token gesture towards bilingualism, the system is minimally so.

For educators in the South Pacific to move away from platitudes about bilingual education, a concerted effort must be made to determine realistically what areas of life in a country are served by which language. At the socio-political level, even though English is used in only limited domains, it exerts a subtle influence in the government bureaucracy so that advancement is tied up largely with proficiency in it. Higher education is conducted in English and therefore those with paper qualifications are invariably better in English and generally get promotions much faster and easier. The value placed on learning the English language by parents is understandable, especially in light of Brudner's (1972) research which suggested that if jobs required a particular proficiency in a particular language, then individuals were more likely to become proficient in that language.

Two conflicting tendencies are apparent in the countries of the South Pacific. One is the felt need to retain and expand the use of the vernacular language in the society (and in the educational system) and to enhance its value at all levels of the society, not simply at the social level; the other is the tendency to valorise the second language since it offers access to higher education and better social mobility. The problem is to reconcile these two aspirations by devising language policies that are practical and realistic in the present context. Such policies may not aim for a completely balanced bilingual population, that is, speakers having the ability to use two languages equally well in all domains. Rather the policy would aim to produce a society which has a linguistic repertoire in each language for appropriately using it in a particular domain. Such a policy would aim to produce a diglossic society. By *diglossia* is meant the use of two or more languages (not necessarily dialects) where each language is used in a clearly defined context, such as school, village, legal system, social functions and so on. This is likely to be a much more 'enduring societal arrangement' (Fishman 1980), than trying to produce a populace that is able to use both languages equally well in all domains.(1)

It would seem that countries like Tonga and Western Samoa particularly, but other monolingual countries like Kiribati, Tuvalu and Cook Islands also, could begin to formulate language policies, the goals of which are to produce a diglossic society, not by default and in a limited way, as at present, but by conscious direction. It needs to be a 'societal arrangement in which individual bilingualism is not only widespread but institutionally buttressed' (Fishman 1980, p.185). Mere formulation of a policy would be insufficient; commitment to such a course has to be matched by pledging human and monetary resources to make this policy work.

One very obvious candidate to begin with in educational contexts is social science which can be both taught in the vernacular and examined in it. The use of the vernacular as a medium of instruction for some of the subjects, at least until Year 10, after which there is generally a substantial dropout, conveys a hidden message to young learners that the vernacular is valued also in the educational system. It opens up other domains in which the vernacular is used – particularly in the domain of education.

Such a policy can be extended to include the teaching of a subject in both the vernacular and in English, as has been tried out in Wales and Canada (Lewis 1978; Swain and Larkin 1982). Any such extension of language in education policy is informed by current research and backed by adequate resources to ensure its success.

Without a conscious effort at informed language in education policies, language development in a society is left to forces other than cultural, to a large extent tied up with real or perceived economic advantages. South Pacific societies are small and thus potentially fragile. 'Natural forces' may not serve these societies well; without careful language policies, Milner's concern about being cut off from one's roots may begin to apply to many countries in the Eastern South Pacific.

## Notes

Both diglossia and bilingualism should be seen as continuous variables, where either can be discussed in terms of degree of its evidence in society, and which, over time, or under special circumstances, can change.

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# TOWARDS COMMUNICATION-ORIENTED ENGLISH TEACHING IN JAPAN: THE INTRODUCTION OF NATIVE ASSISTANT ENGLISH TEACHERS

**by Yasukata Yano**

***Teaching English in Japan is typically that of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in that English is not taught to be used in daily life as a means of communication. What is unique about it in this country is that it has been distorted by the so-called 'examination-hell' which all students must go through to enter high schools and colleges and universities. As a result, the main purpose and function of TEFL at schools have come to be a means to teach 'English for examination' so that students can pass a series of entrance examinations to high schools, colleges and universities.***

***English entrance examinations are mostly grammar-oriented written tests due to the insufficient facilities and manpower on the side of those who give the examinations and the need to select the top 3-20% of hundreds of thousands of applicants in a short period of less than a week. As a result, English teachers at junior and senior high schools have to cram students with detailed grammar rules and a disproportionately large vocabulary which is unfit for daily use. Hence, entrance examinations have come to be regarded as the source of all evils that have distorted the English teaching in this country.***

***The time seems to have come, however, for English teaching in Japan to move from a grammar-oriented towards a more communication-oriented teaching, since that is what Japanese society has begun to require.***

## Factors for change

This may be reflection of insular mentality, but the Japanese like to talk about their country's internationalisation. It is true, however, that Japan depends on foreign trade and war-avoiding diplomacy for her survival, and therefore, her interactions with foreign countries have greatly increased in politics, economy, science, technology, arts and sports. As a result, the Japanese people have increasingly come into contact with foreign people at home and abroad. They have to interact with people from different cultures, logically arguing with, expressing themselves and persuading, in English. Communicative skills in English are in great demand, English being a language of international communication.

Major business firms used to employ college graduates and train them to be international businessmen. With business activities rapidly growing on a global scale, they can no longer afford the time to train employees. They have started to turn their eyes to returnees from colleges and universities in America, Britain, Australia and other English-speaking countries for their communication skills in English and training in logical thinking and self-presentation skills. Major business firms have also started to employ Japanese graduates of American universities' Japanese schools for the same reason. Graduates of Temple University Japan, for example, were all employed in top-ranking business firms despite the fact that the Ministry of Education has not accredited those foreign universities in Japan and therefore those graduates were not regarded as B.A. holders. This made college students who wanted to get employment in big business firms rush to English language schools while in college. This came to be known as the 'double school race' phenomenon.

The Council on University Education Reform recommended that English lessons be taken at language schools and certificates of various English proficiency tests to be counted as substitutes for English courses at the liberal arts curriculum of colleges and universities.

***It is desirable that the learners of English be exposed to people and culture of English-speaking countries.***

These factors have certainly accelerated the move toward more communication-oriented English teaching in this country at all levels. It is desirable that the learners of English be exposed to people and culture of English-speaking countries. Why don't we ask native English speakers to help us teach English at junior and senior high schools? In this way a program started which brought in native English speakers on a large scale to English classrooms of public junior and senior high schools in this country. The program is called the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program and native English speakers are called Assistant English Teachers (AETs). Before talking about the JET Program, however, let us have an overview of how native-speaker English teachers are helping TEFL in this country.

## Native-speaker English teachers in Japan

We can divide the Japanese schools where native-speakers teach English roughly into three categories: colleges and universities; junior and senior high schools; and special schools. What is meant by 'special school' here is English language schools, English language program of private corporations, universities' continuing education centers, and so-called culture centers.

In the English departments of Japanese colleges and universities, we have very few native-speaker faculty members unless the institution is Christian-founded. We are fully aware of the merit of having native-speaking English teachers as our colleagues, but they are required to have a near-native command of Japanese to serve on various committees and carry out administrative work as well as research and teaching. This has made it very hard to have non-Japanese scholars as tenure-tracked full-time faculty members. In order to get native-speaking English instructors, therefore, national and public colleges and universities have set up the 'foreigner teacher' position, which is a 4-5 year contract. Some private colleges and universities have followed suit.

At junior and senior high schools in Japan, there are no full-time native-speaker English teachers at public schools. Only a small number of Christian-founded and other private schools have them either on a full-time or part-time basis. Lately the Government has started a program in which native English speakers and Japanese teachers of English 'team-teach' at schools. This is the above-mentioned JET Program which will be discussed later.

At special schools, we find more native-speaker English teachers than in the above two categories. It is these English language schools and English language divisions of private corporations and culture centers, not colleges and universities, where qualified native-speaker English teachers make the most of their training in TEFL. Here full-time teaching staff plan curricula, develop teaching materials, and do administrative work such as supervising and recruiting of language teachers. Most of the teachers, however, are part time instructors. Nevertheless, they have better teaching conditions than those who teach at colleges and universities: shorter class periods, more frequent class sessions per week, smaller classes and grouping of students based on their proficiency. Moreover, students have a clear aim of attending the class, 'to learn English.' Naturally their motivation is kept high. Unfortunately, none of this can be expected in English classes at colleges and universities.

## The JET Program and AETs

The idea of having native-speaker English teachers as advisors and supervisors has been put into practice since the 1960s through the Fulbright English Teachers Program and the British English Teachers Scheme.

In 1977, the Ministry of Education started the Australian Monbusho (Ministry of Education) English Fellow Program. It is a program to dispatch a native-speaker English teacher or two to prefectures (Japanese equivalent of State) at their request to help Japanese teachers of English.

***The presence of a native-speaker English teacher in a class has a great impact on junior and senior high school students.***

In 1987, Monbusho Fellow Program was expanded to the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program. The Program has two groups of native English speakers: Coordinators for International Relations and Assistant English Teachers, called AETs. The former work at prefectural or municipal offices for international exchange. The latter visit public junior and senior high schools and help Japanese teachers of English through 'team-teaching.'

The AET Program has in general been received favourably. The presence of a native-speaker

English teacher in a class has a great impact on junior and senior high school students. They are enthusiastic about having an AET in their class and are excited at communicating in English with a 'genuine' speaker of English. They have come to realise that communicative skills are important, have studied seriously, and thus have developed their communicative skills.

However, the number of AETs is much too small yet, compared with the number of schools they are assigned to visit for team-teaching. In 1987, there were 848 AETs. In the following year, the number increased to 1,443, and in 1989, the number further increased to 1,987. In 1990 the number was approximately 2,500. In 1991, 120 Australians will take part in the scheme.

***In Japanese schools the teaching of English is conducted with a view to passing arcane and complex entrance examinations rather than with a view to communicating.***

At first, AETs were too few in number to be engaged in 'team-teaching', and had to do so-called 'one-shot' visits. That is, an AET visited a school one day, visited another school the next day, and in this way, kept visiting different schools in the district, never coming back to the same school again. What he or she did in the one short visit was to introduce himself or herself, talk a bit about the life and culture of his or her home country, play some games or sing some English songs, or read some passages in the school textbooks as if he or she were a tape recorder.

With the number of AETs increasing, progress has been made in the direction of longer stays at each school and more in-depth participation in school life. The so-called 'regular visit' started. That is, an AET went to several schools in the district every week, the same school on the same day of the week.

With a further increase in AET numbers, another system, 'base school' became possible. That is, an AET stays at one school for the entire year and participates in planning, team teaching and lesson evaluation. Though it is closest to the original aim of the AET program, many prefectures and cities combine the 'regular visit' and 'base school' system, having an AET stay at one school, but also visit several schools in the district every week.

## Problems in the JET Program

As the JET Program grows larger, problems inevitably arise. One of them is the qualifications of AETs. At present, anyone can apply if he or she is a native speaker of English and a college graduate or is expected to graduate. No teaching experience or proficiency in Japanese is required. As a result, quite a few AETs have applied not because they wanted to teach English but because they were interested in Japan as a tourist. Good pay is another reason. It is hard to find a job of ¥300,000 (about A$2,600) a month just by teaching one's own language. The majority of the present AETs are young native speakers of English with little or no teaching experience.

Another problem is the difference between the traditional teacher-centred lecture type teaching of Japan and the student-centred participatory type learning of the English-speaking countries. Those AETs eager to be of help get frustrated because, as an inexperienced newcomer, he or she cannot encourage the older, more experienced Japanese teachers of English to try a different approach. Furthermore, the fact remains in Japanese schools that the teaching of English is conducted with a view to passing arcane and complex entrance examinations rather than with a view to communicating. Japanese teachers of English are responsible for teaching all planned points of English for examinations which are scheduled in the curriculum. They do not always welcome 'team teaching' because they are afraid of getting behind schedule. Here AETs not only have difficulty in merging English for communication with English for examinations but have the feeling of not being appreciated.

On top of these occupational frustrations, AETs face another kind of frustration. During the initial orientation, people were sympathetic, encouraging and responsive and spoke English. Then AETs were sent to their respective cities and started to live there. They had to cope with the day-to-day problems with little or no knowledge of Japanese language, culture and lifestyle. People were indifferent or too busy to help these newcomers. They were often taken to social events but with little or no real communication. As a result, some AETs gradually alienated themselves from the work and from the society they lived in. Eventually these AETs went home, their initial aspiration crushed, much disappointed with Japan and with the system in which they could not do much to help students, and with strong negative feelings about Japan and its people.

## Some proposals to improve the situation

Japanese are very fond of things 'genuine'. They are eager to learn English from the 'genuine' speaker of English no matter how poorly he or she may be qualified as an English teacher. Thus AETs have a great impact on Japanese students as well as teachers. They are guaranteed a comfortable place as an English teacher. Besides, the demand is increasing since modern society requires the Japanese to be equipped with English for communication.

It is unfortunate, however, that some AETs never learn Japanese language, life and culture. They do not realise that staying a monolingual and monocultural English speaker is much to their disadvantage. In a sense, being a native speaker of English is unfortunate because one doesn't have to learn other languages, English being a means of international communication.

AETs ought to learn as much about Japan as possible – her language, life and culture, and through the contact with various Japanese in so doing, enjoy staying in this country. Moreover, they will be better-qualified teachers when they learn their students' mother tongue, way of thinking and behaviour.

***The majority of the present AETs are young native speakers of English with little or no teaching experience.***

The initial orientation for AETs should include seminars on Japanese language, life and culture for a smoother adjustment to the new environment. Certainly Westerners should remain Westerners because that is part of the educational exchange along with the language. However, there are occasions when they must exercise appropriate cultural restraint and some guidance for this must be given so that AETs can effectively communicate and work within the Japanese culture.

Another orientation seminar or workshop should be held locally where AETs and Japanese teachers of English get to know each other, receive training together, and plan their team teaching together. Japanese language lessons should also be made accessible locally so that AETs can continue studying Japanese.

The mid-year seminar workshop should be expanded so that AETs and Japanese teachers of English can interact socially and professionally, exchanging opinions and experiences.

Lastly, an evaluation seminar should be organised so that AETs and Japanese teachers of English can jointly review the year's program and make it available to the planners of the following year.

## Conclusion

The JET Program has had a great impact on English teaching in junior and senior high schools and in general has very well been received.

The JET Program should be expanded further so that there are enough AETs for each to stay at a school for the entire school year. Then AETs and Japanese teachers of English can plan the yearly curriculum and individual lessons together, teach cooperatively as a team, and evaluate lessons together. AETs can feel a sense of participation and both Japanese teachers of English and students will greatly benefit from closer association with AETs in and out of the classrooms and we can expect greater improvement in their communicative skills in English.

If, furthermore, AETs return home after a year or two of teaching with fond memories of Japan and a feeling of satisfaction that they contributed to English teaching in this country, and stay as our friends, they will be invaluable assets for Japan.

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# ABORIGINAL ENGLISH: AN INTRODUCTION

by Diana Eades

***The majority of Aboriginal people in Australia today speak one or more of a number of language varieties which are related in some way to English. This paper deals with Aboriginal English, the name given to dialects of English which are spoken by Aboriginal people and which differ from Standard Australian English in systematic ways. And in explaining the origins of Aboriginal dialects of English, this paper will also briefly discuss Aboriginal pidgin and creole languages, which have held a place in the development of Aboriginal English, but which are different from Aboriginal English.***

## Origins of Aboriginal English

From the very first white contact, Aboriginal people have used some English in their communication with English speakers. This is hardly surprising, given two well-known facts:

- the extreme Anglo-centric views of English speakers during the whole period of Australia's history including contemporary times.
- the tremendous linguistic diversity of Aboriginal languages at the time of white contact (Dixon 1989).

In the initial stages of the British settlement, Aboriginal people and whites used a simplified amalgamation of English and Aboriginal languages in their attempts to communicate. In linguistic terms this early form of communication was not a language, since it had fluctuating rules, and thus it was not systematic. In many areas, this early communication developed into stabilized language systems, called pidgins, which are by definition used only for inter-cultural contact, and never as the first language of any of their speakers. Contrary to popular belief, pidgin varieties are rule-governed, and effective systems of communication in the social contexts in which they are used.

Within a few years of the first British settlement in 1788 at Port Jackson (now Sydney), a pidgin English developed between the colonists and local Aboriginal people (Troy 1990). As the settlement grew, so did this contact language. Its growth throughout Queensland in the nineteenth century has been documented by Dutton (1983). Harris (1986) traces the development of Aboriginal pidgin Englishes in the Northern Territory, beginning from the Raffles Bay settlement in 1827-29 (in the north-east of what is now known as Arnhem Land). But this settlement, like a number of other early settlements in the Northern Territory, was short-lived, and it was not until the first permanent settlement at what is now Darwin in 1869, that pidgin really took hold in this part of Australia.

It is not clear whether there are any Aboriginal pidgin English varieties still spoken in Australia today. That is, there is not clear evidence of a reduced contact language used only for inter-cultural communication, and not as the first language of any of its speakers. So what has happened to them, and what are the language varieties which Aboriginal people speak in many places today? Why don't linguists call these language varieties pidgin English?

From the beginning of the twentieth century, the Aboriginal pidgin varieties which were spoken in contact, mainly between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, developed in one of two ways: they became creole languages, or they developed into Aboriginal dialects of English.

## Creole languages in Australia today

In remote areas of northern Australia, the pidgins became widely used for contact between Aboriginal people speaking different indigenous languages. The Government and Church policies of establishing reserves where people from many different language speaking groups were moved, were a considerable catalyst in this process. As these pidgin languages took on this wider purpose, their use increased, and they developed in all areas – sound systems, grammar, vocabulary, and use. The first such Aboriginal reserve in the Northern Territory was the Anglican mission which was established at Roper River (now Ngukurr) in 1908. Within a decade of its establishment, this pidgin had become the first language of children on the mission. (Harris and Sandefur 1984). At this stage the variety is known linguistically as a creole language.

As it is used increasingly as the first language by its speakers, this creole language has developed and expanded linguistically. Today, this Aboriginal creole language is known as Kriol, and it is spoken widely throughout northern Australia. The growth of Kriol has been well documented by Harris 1986, and Sandefur 1985.

Another creole language, Torres Strait Creole, is spoken throughout the Torres Strait islands (Shnukal 1989). It is thought that there are considerable and complex relationships between these two creole languages.

## Aboriginal English in Australia today

In the less remote areas of Australia, a number of factors have resulted in the Aboriginal use of English both as a lingua franca for Aboriginal people, as well as the first language of the majority of them.

Perhaps the most significant contributing factor has again been the mixing of Aboriginal people speaking many languages on Government reserves and Church missions from the beginning of this century, as well as in country towns and cities.

Here a lingua franca is needed for Aboriginal people whose traditional language they do not speak. Thus the early pidgin languages needed to change to enable speakers to communicate not just with white bosses in restricted contexts, but with Aboriginal neighbours in a full range of contexts. But in these less remote areas, the Aboriginal people had increasing contact also with (non-Aboriginal) speakers of English. Thus the pidgin changed not towards a creole language as in the remote areas, but in the direction of Standard English. This process is known linguistically as *depidginisation.*

***The development of Aboriginal English is thus quite complex, with many different historical, social and linguistic factors being involved..***

(Photo courtesy of the Australian Information Service)

*In a business environment Aboriginal English gives way to Standard English*

But not all varieties of Aboriginal English have developed through depidginisation. In some areas Aboriginal people have grown up speaking English as their first language, and they have Aboriginalised this English, with influences from other Aboriginal varieties including Aboriginal English and Kriol. The development of Aboriginal English is thus quite complex, with many different historical, social and linguistic factors being involved.

Another important factor in the development of Aboriginal dialects of English has been the widespread death of traditional Aboriginal languages, particularly in the less remote areas of Australia (Dixon 1989).

Today the majority of Aboriginal Australians speak varieties of English as their first language. In linguistic terms, this is not just English, but Aboriginal English. That is, it is a distinctive dialect of English which reflects, maintains and continually creates Aboriginal culture and identity.

## Is there only one dialect of Aboriginal English?

In linguistic terms Aboriginal English is a dialect of English. That is, it is mutually intelligible with Standard English, and it is rule-governed or systematic. In fact it is an oversimplification to speak of one dialect of Aboriginal English, just as it would be to speak of one dialect of British English (eg the differences in grammar, sound systems, and vocabulary between Cockney and Newcastle English). There are a number of Aboriginal English dialects, or more accurately a continuum of Aboriginal English dialects, ranging from close to Standard English at one end (the *acrolect*), to close to Aboriginal Kriol at the other (the *basilect*).

## Where is Aboriginal English spoken today?

Aboriginal English is spoken throughout Australia, as either a first or second language of the great majority of Aboriginal people. It is thought to be the first language of most Aboriginal people in the areas where traditional languages and Kriol are not spoken. As there has been no national survey of Aboriginal English it is not possible to be precise. However, linguistic studies of Aboriginal English have covered the following regions: Western Australia (Kaldor and Malcolm 1985), North Queensland (Alexander 1965, 1968 and Dutton 1965), Southeast Queensland (Eades 1988, Readdy 1961), Alice Springs (Sharpe 1977, Harkins 1989), Sydney (Eagleson 1982), and Melbourne (Fesl 1977).

From Kaldor and Malcolm (forthcoming) we can see that Aboriginal English with the more basilectal features is spoken in the more remote areas, where it is influenced by Kriol, while the more acrolectal features are in the Aboriginal English spoken in urban and metropolitan areas.

Just as in pre-contact times Aboriginal people spoke a number of languages and dialects, contemporary speakers of Aboriginal English are often bilingual or bidialectal. In more remote areas many Aboriginal people speak Aboriginal English in interactions with whites, and Kriol in interactions with other Aboriginal people. And in the less remote areas many speak more basilectal Aboriginal English in Aboriginal interactions, and more acrolectal Aboriginal English, or even Standard English, in interactions with whites. Thus, non-Aboriginal people who have dealings with Aboriginal people in official domains such as employment or education may not always be aware of their use of Aboriginal varieties of English.

***Aboriginal English is a distinctive dialect of English which reflects, maintains and continually creates Aboriginal culture and identity.***

## Features

The definition of Aboriginal English must take in all aspects of language, that is phonology (or sound system), morphology (or the grammar of words and parts of words), syntax (or the grammar of sentences), semantics (or word and sentence meaning), lexicon (or vocabulary), and pragmatics (or the speaker's meaning in sociocultural context). In this section I give examples to illustrate these different aspects of Aboriginal English.

I have explained above that Aboriginal English is really a continuum of dialects. Certain features are shared very widely throughout all of these dialects, while other features are localised within certain regions, or along the continuum from basilectal to acrolectal varieties. The examples of phonology and morpho-syntax given below occur more in the basilectal varieties, while the remaining examples are found much more widely, through acrolectal varieties as well.

Interested readers are referred to Kaldor and Malcolm (1985, and forthcoming) for information about the distribution of features of Aboriginal English.

### Phonology (sound system)

Many varieties of Aboriginal English have no word initial -h. This feature is a result of the influence of traditional Aboriginal languages which had no -h sound, and it also coincides with some other non-standard varieties of English.

| *Aboriginal English* | *Standard English* |
|---|---|
| Arry's at. | Harry's hat. |

### Morpho-syntax (grammar)

To express possession, many varieties of Aboriginal English simply juxtapose the possessor and the possessed. In contrast, to express possession in Standard English, the possessor noun receives the suffix -s.

| *Aboriginal English* | *Standard English* |
|---|---|
| I can't see that man car | I can't see the man's car |
| Where Tom house? | Where is Tom's house? |

Note that this grammatical construction parallels the expression of possession in Aboriginal traditional languages. It is inaccurate to describe this linguistic feature of Aboriginal English in terms of speakers 'dropping off the Standard English possessive -s suffix'.

### Lexico-semantics (words and their meaning)

In the area of lexicon there is often specific regional variation. So, for example, the word for 'policeman' in much of NSW and Queensland is 'buliman'. This word is one of the most persistent items of Aboriginal English vocabulary.

Kaldor and Malcolm (1985) give some examples of English words used with different meanings in West Australian Aboriginal English.

| *Aboriginal English* | *Standard English* |
|---|---|
| jar (verb) | scold |
| dust (verb) | overtake car on dusty road |
| big mob | many, much |

### Pragmatics (meaning in socio-cultural context)

The area of pragmatics, or meaning in its socio-cultural context, is where we frequently see the most persistent features of Aboriginal English. That is, even in urban and metropolitan areas where Aboriginal speakers use linguistic forms which are very close to, and often identical to, Standard English, there are significant aspects of meaning which are not shared with speakers of Standard English, because of important socio-cultural differences. In other words the same utterance may have different meanings in Aboriginal English and in Standard English, because of the significant cultural differences. Or, Aboriginal speakers may use English in different ways, as is frequently the case, for example, where they want to find out information.

***Aboriginal English has been recognised by linguists and educators as a valid, rule-governed variety of English***

Direct questions are used to seek certain information, such as clarification of details about a person (eg 'where's he from?'). But in situations where Aboriginal people want to find out significant or personal information, they do not use direct questions. It is important for Aboriginal people not to embarrass someone by putting them 'on the spot'. So people volunteer some of their own information, hinting about what they are trying to find out about. Information is sought as part of a two-way exchange. Silence, and waiting till people are ready to give information, are also central to Aboriginal ways of seeking any substantial information.

This indirect way of seeking information is a part of the Aboriginal socio-cultural context. Aboriginal societies in Australia are based on small-scale interaction between people who know each other and are often related to each other. Information or knowledge is often not freely accessible. Certain people have rights to certain knowledge. So, information is sought as part of an exchange between people who are in a reciprocal, on-going relationship.

Although people in mainstream Australian society can recognise these ways of seeking information, they use them only in sensitive situations. In Aboriginal interactions these are the everyday strategies used to seek substantial information.

Mainstream Australian society, on the other hand, is a large scale society where information is highly valued and where direct questions are frequently used. In fact we have 'institutionalised' the question in our interviews and questionnaires.

*The widespread use of Aboriginal English has implications for the education of Aboriginal children*

(Photo courtesy of the Australian Information Service)

So, there is a significant difference in the way English is used between Aboriginal societies and mainstream societies in Australia. To take one example here, silence in Aboriginal conversations is frequently a sign of a comfortable interaction, and is not interpreted as communication breakdown, as it so often is in Standard Australian English conversations.

## But isn't it just uneducated English?

To people not trained in linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis, it might sometimes appear that Aboriginal English is simply an uneducated variety of English. While there are a number of features, particularly grammatical features, which Aboriginal English shares with other non-Standard dialects of English, there are many features of Aboriginal English which are distinctively Aboriginal. In our examples above, we see overlap with uneducated English in the phonology example, but not in the other examples.

## Implications

It is only since the 1960s that Aboriginal English has been recognised by linguists and educators as a valid, rule-governed variety of English which differs significantly from Standard English in a number of ways. There is still a widespread lack of acceptance of Aboriginal English, which is often based on ignorance. In areas where Aboriginal English does not sound very different from Standard English both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal speakers are often unaware of the subtle, but crucial differences between the two dialects. Consequently, many Aboriginal English speakers are disadvantaged in their dealings with mainstream institutions, such as education, employment, health and the law, because of the miscommunications arising from the differences between their dialect of English and Standard English.

Once Aboriginal English is truly accepted as a genuine and valid variety of English, and the significant differences between it and Standard English are recognised, then there are some very important consequences for language policy in this country.

One such consequence is the recognition of the need for Aboriginal English speakers to have access to interpreters, particularly in the legal system. Here, an individual's rights frequently depend on their ability to participate in complex interviews. As we have seen above, many speakers of Aboriginal English use questions in a very different way from mainstream Australian speakers of English. Thus they are disadvantaged by the complex questioning used in police, lawyer and courtroom interviews. Further, pragmatic differences may lead to misinterpretation.

For example, silence in answer to certain questions in mainstream interviews is interpreted as either ignorance or admission of guilt. In Aboriginal English however, as we have seen above, silence should not be interpreted in this way, as positive uses of silence are common in Aboriginal interactions. Although legally silence is not to be taken as admission of guilt, it is difficult for police officers, legal professionals or jurors to set aside strong cultural intuitions about the meaning of silence, especially where they are not aware of cultural differences in the use and interpretation of silence. Thus this pragmatic difference between Aboriginal English and Standard English may have disastrous legal consequences. This issue is discussed further in Eades (forthcoming).

***Another important issue is the right of Aboriginal English speaking children to have education in their own dialect.***

Another important issue is the right of Aboriginal English speaking children to have education in their own dialect, and to learn to speak Standard English as a second dialect (Kaldor and Malcolm 1985). While some schools recognise and cater for this right, many still do not.

This issue parallels a matter which became the subject of a landmark court case in the US in 1979 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Black parents at an elementary school in a low-income housing area took the School District Board to court for failing to recognise the language difficulties faced by their children, and to educate them accordingly. The children were all speakers of the Black dialect of English (known as Black English Vernacular, or BEV), which like Aboriginal English, is a significantly different dialect of English. The children, who were achieving very poorly at school, were classified by the school as learning disabled, or in need of speech therapy. The parents' case depended on whether BEV was sufficiently different from Standard English to constitute a barrier to learning. With the help of linguists, the parents were successful. The judge ordered that the school district must recognise BEV, must develop a program to help teachers to recognise it, and must offer teachers methods of using that knowledge in teaching black children Standard English (Chambers 1983). The implications of this American case are significant for educators of Aboriginal English-speaking students in Australia.

Other areas of language planning and policy which need to address the largest language variety spoken by Aboriginal people include the media, health and welfare.

## Conclusion

The depressing scene of the widespread death of traditional Aboriginal languages is only one part of the story of Aboriginal language in Australia. In this brief paper, we have seen that Aboriginal ways of interacting and communicating are strong, viable and persistent. Such is this strength that it has created Aboriginal varieties of English which are used widely throughout the country, and which continually serve to reinforce and create modern Aboriginal culture and identity. Recognition and understanding of Aboriginal English is an essential prerequisite to effective communication between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

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# ETHNIC MINORITY PUPILS IN THE NETHERLANDS

### by Jo Kloprogge

The ethnic diversity of Dutch society has increased considerably during the past 45 years. After World War II, Moluccan families arrived and people of Dutch-Indonesian origin emigrated to the Netherlands. Dutch-Indonesians were absorbed quickly into Dutch society. Moluccans came to the Netherlands mostly because they were part of the Dutch army in the conflict over Indonesian independency. They perceived their stay in the Netherlands as temporary and started to participate in Dutch society on no more than an individual basis (Eldering 1989). From the 1960s onwards, greater waves of immigrants started to come to the Netherlands. One part of these were foreign workers, coming from Mediterranean countries, such as Italy, Spain, Yugoslavia, Greece, Portugal, Turkey, Morocco and Tunisia. Another part consisted of immigrants from what now are the former Dutch colonies in South America: Surinam and the Dutch Antilles. More recently, refugees from several parts of the world have come to constitute a new category of immigrants. Since the opening of Eastern European frontiers, the influx of people from these areas seems to be increasing as well. The largest groups of immigrants are the Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese. The overall proportion of ethnic minorities is now about 6%, which is relatively small in comparison with other Western European countries.

## Educational policies toward ethnic minority groups

Before 1974 schools that were having special problems, such as an influx of immigrant children, could apply for support even though there did not yet exist an explicit policy framework with regard to the education of immigrants. In 1974 the first official document laying down educational policy towards ethnic minorities was drafted. This policy aimed at improving the educational opportunities of Dutch working class children and paid specific attention to pupils from ethnic minority groups. The term 'guest workers' children' was still in use at that time. The government clearly expected that many of these 'guest workers' would eventually return to their home countries. It therefore introduced Mother Tongue and Native Culture Tuition to facilitate the eventual return of the children to their home country. In addition, a more consistent system of allocating extra teachers to schools with large proportions of at-risk pupils was introduced.

During the period 1980-1986 a specific educational policy on ethnic minority pupils was in force. Then, in 1986, the new educational priority programme, or OVB (after its Dutch initials) was introduced. From that moment on, this policy has been the main framework for dealing with children at-risk, both children from low socio-economic status (SES) groups and children from ethnic minorities. The policy aims at reducing the disadvantages of these children in such areas as basic skills, school careers, and referral to special education. In this article I will concentrate on the policy towards ethnic minority pupils. The policy focuses on primary education rather than on secondary or preschool programs. A system of weightings was introduced in primary education in 1985. When parents enrol a child in a primary school, they are asked about their own education, their jobs and their country of birth. This information is used to assign a weighting to the pupil. The most important weightings are:

1.0 for Dutch middle class pupils

1.25 for Dutch working class pupils

1.9 for ethnic minority pupils.

These weightings are used to determine the number of teachers that can be allocated to a school. This means that schools with predominantly ethnic minority pupils have a much lower pupil-teacher ratio than schools with mostly Dutch pupils.

***Multicultural education should improve the relationships between pupils of different cultures.***

Because there are regions where at-risk groups are concentrated – such as the inner city areas of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht – an additional policy has been drawn up. In 70 regions where at-risk groups are concentrated networks of schools have been formed. These networks receive additional subsidies that are used for a number of activities. A coordinator (often working in the school advisory service) plans the organisation and financing of the activities. For ethnic minority pupils two specific additional policies have been set up. One is aimed at introducing multicultural education (Dutch publications use the term 'intercultural') in all schools. Multicultural education should improve the relationships between pupils of different cultures. There has been a constant debate about what multicultural education should actually consist of, and daily practices in schools have been criticised as being too folkloristic. A problem is that schools with only a small proportion of ethnic pupils do not seem to be very keen on working on the subject.

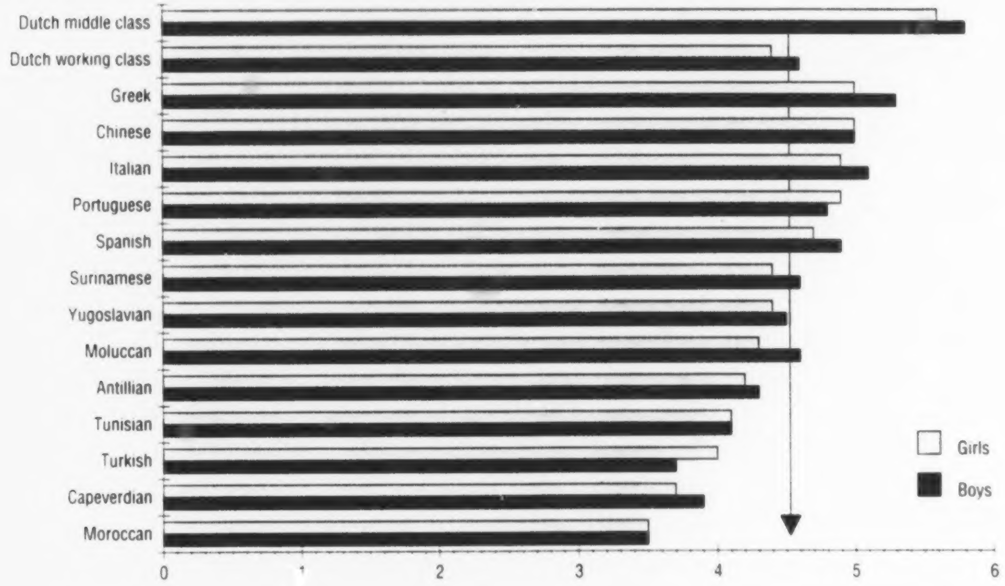
The second policy concerns Mother Tongue and Native Culture Tuition (MTNCT), which was introduced in 1974. Initially, MTNCT was considered useful mainly for preparing pupils for the return to their home country. Teachers were contacted in such countries as Turkey, Morocco, Yugoslavia and Spain. By 1980 it was clear that remigration would take place only on a very limited scale. Nevertheless, MTNCT was continued. However, it was reduced to 2.5 hours a week within school time (with an option to add 2.5 hours outside school time) and its purpose became to foster the well-being of the children and to prevent them from becoming alienated from their parents and their family. MTNCT cannot really be seen as a type of bilingual education. Nevertheless, research has shown that proficiency in the first language improves in some cases. Moreover, most children enjoy MTNCT lessons and there is no negative effect on second language (Dutch) proficiency. MTNCT is still a highly controversial subject in discussions about education for minority pupils, both among minority organisations and among Dutch politicians and educationalists.

## The school careers of ethnic minority pupils

A great deal of research has been conducted in the field of ethnic minority pupils in education. The results are quite consistent in showing the seriousness of the educational disadvantages of specific minority groups. The situation of Turkish and Moroccan pupils is the most problematic. After primary school they enter the lowest streams of secondary education and often leave secondary school without qualifications. The drop-out rate is estimated to be high, especially among Turkish and Moroccan girls. Even though school careers have recently been seen to improve to some extent, it is to be feared that it will still take quite some time before greater numbers of Turkish and Moroccan pupils attain higher educational qualifications and enter the universities. The situation of children from the Caribbean area is less dramatic, if far from satisfactory. In contrast, the school careers of children from the Northern Mediterranean countries, like Greece, Italy and Spain are developing relatively favourably. These children seem to have surpassed Dutch working class pupils and are now approaching the level of Dutch middle class pupils.

**TABLE 1**

**Position in Secondary Education**



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In Table 1 the position of several ethnic minority groups in the third year of secondary education is sketched. Other research projects support the evidence presented here, with only minor deviations. Much attention has been paid to identifying the variables that can account for these patterns. The socio-economic status (SES) of the parents appears to have the most important influence. It has even been shown that the concept of 'socio-economic status' of the family can be reduced to 'educational level of the parents'. The influence of SES is both visible between groups and within groups. For instance, most Turkish and Moroccan parents in the Netherlands have low educational qualifications, certainly much lower than Northern Mediterranean parents have. Within the Turkish and Moroccan groups it has been proved that children from relatively high SES groups perform quite well in education and have a far better command of the Dutch language than children of parents in low SES groups. It would, however, be unwise to overestimate the influence of SES, because the way parents raise their children and the importance they attach to education is also determined by culture and religion. Though 'cultural distance' may be a somewhat vague concept, it is clear that the 'cultural gap' between the native and the host culture is much greater for children from the Riff area in Morocco than for children from Spain and Italy. In programs set up to improve the educational chances of minority pupils, more and more attention is paid to second language learning, because proficiency in Dutch is a key to educational qualifications.

## Second language learning

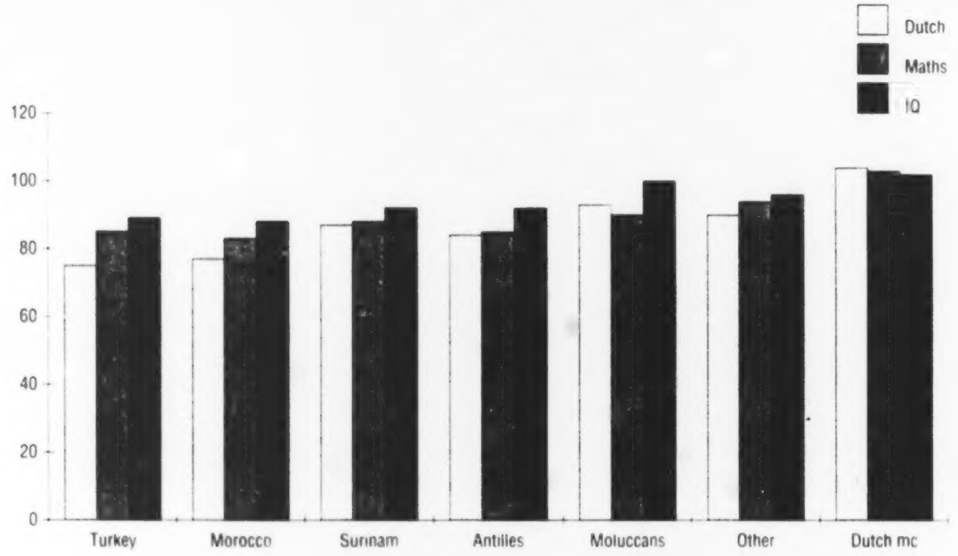
The system of allocating extra teachers to schools with many minority pupils seems to have failed to produce a high level of command of Dutch among minority pupils. In most schools the extra teaching facilities were used to reduce class size. There is ample evidence from research all over the world that pupils only benefit from a reduction of class size if the average size of the classes becomes really very small (see Slavin, Karweit & Madden 1989). Only recently was it recognised that teaching a second language requires a different approach than teaching a first language or a foreign language. In 1989 special second language programs were introduced in Dutch schools, second language methods were developed and made available and courses were organised for teachers in the field of second language teaching.

The disastrous situation of, in particular, Turkish and Moroccan pupils with regard to Dutch language proficiency is presented in Table 2, which is based on the results of tests measuring Dutch language proficiency, mathematics skills and intelligence (partly verbal, partly non-verbal). The tests were administered to 50,000 pupils in 800 primary schools.

Table 2 shows the results of the tests of pupils in primary group 8 (just before they transfer to secondary education). The scores are standardised. It can be seen that

TABLE 2

Test Scores Group 8 (12 year olds)



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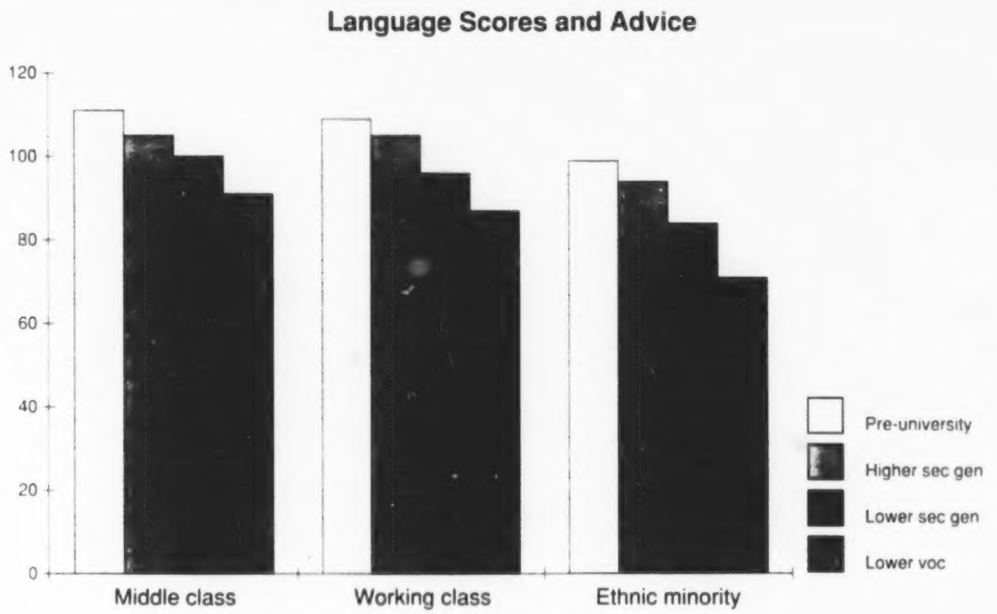
- the average score of all minority groups is below the national average of 100;
- the scores of Turkish and Moroccan pupils are extremely low; and
- the differences in test results in Dutch are much more pronounced than in mathematics and intelligence.

It also became clear that when these test results are used as indicators, the educational disadvantages of minority groups are much greater than when school careers are used as indicators. The average score of Dutch working class pupils on the language test was 98, which is higher than the score of any minority group. In contrast, Table 1 suggested that the educational position of pupils from several ethnic minority groups was even better than that of Dutch working class pupils. The explanation for this remarkable phenomenon can be found in Table 3, in which the test scores are related to the advice pupils receive as to the type of secondary school to which they should transfer. It should be mentioned here that the school's advice is of major importance for the children's school careers, because it is usually followed by the parents.

Apparently, schools advise different groups of pupils differently. Pupils from minority groups who are referred to higher forms of secondary education have much lower test scores than Dutch middle class pupils who are referred to the same form of secondary education. It is not yet clear whether this is common practice at all schools, or whether the advice patterns are related to different school populations. A crucial question is whether teachers are right in using this strategy. By monitoring the pupils after leaving primary school it will be possible to see whether or not they succeed in secondary education.

TABLE 3



## Bilingual education

Bilingual education is a rare phenomenon in The Netherlands. In some schools it is being tried out as an experiment. The regular practice in schools is monolingual education, recently enriched by the introduction of specific second language methods. From the research evidence presented here it might be gathered that the regular practice is sufficiently effective for some minority groups, but that this certainly is not the case for Turkish and Moroccan pupils. In December 1989 the State Secretary of Education stated that he intended to introduce bilingual education on a large scale; the current MTNCT program would be changed into a system of bilingual education. These intentions received a great deal of attention in the media and were immediately criticised by a number of opponents who argued that time spent on learning the first language was 'lost time' which was better used for learning the second language.

Research evidence is not conclusive on this score. Evaluations of bilingual programs often conclude that:

- the programs are positive for the motivation and the well-being of the children;
- the programs help to maintain or improve the command of the first language; and
- the pupils in the programs are not performing better or worse in the second language, compared to pupils in monolingual programs.

This evidence can be used in two ways. It may be argued that it is not good enough to justify the introduction of costly bilingual programs. On the other hand, it may be argued that it is good enough to try out bilingual programs in situations where the current practices clearly fail. An interesting contrast with the situation in Australia is that maintaining the first language is in itself not viewed positively in Dutch language policy. Teaching the first language is only accepted as a shortcut to improving second language teaching. This may seem surprising for a country with a long tradition of foreign language teaching. Some possible explanations for this situation may be mentioned here. First of all, Dutch is not an international language. That is why English is taught in primary school and secondary school. Consequently, introducing minority languages would in fact not result in bilingual, but in trilingual education. Another explanation may be related to the fact that Dutch emigrants are not very attached to their own language. The figures presented in *Vox* No. 3 (Clyne & Jaehrling, 1989) illustrate the enormous differences in language shift among immigrant groups. These figures may have great relevance for the situation in the Netherlands: perhaps the Dutch simply cannot understand that other people may be less inclined to give up their first language in another country than they are.

Again, another explanation may be found in the relatively low status that is attributed to some languages. Whereas English, French and Spanish are valued as important, this is much less the case for several other languages. Though it might be argued that a wide variety of languages is of importance for a small country with many international contacts, this view does not gain much support. A few Dutch linguists have defended this point of view, but they seem to stand alone. It is not to be expected in the foreseeable future that the relatively low status of minority languages in Dutch language policy will change.

## Minorities in society

Western European communities seem not to adapt easily to the presence of people of diverse cultural backgrounds. They have less experience in dealing with this situation than countries that are used to large scale immigration. The process of developing a multi-cultural society frequently uncovers value conflicts and weaknesses that were not seen before. The nature of these value conflicts and weaknesses may be very diverse. In France, the question of how to react to Islamic girls wearing headscarfs in school became the subject of heated discussions on a national scale. In the Netherlands two quite different problems have become a topic of debate. One is what has been called 'white flight', that is, the tendency among Dutch parents to take their children from schools that have, in their eyes, too many minority pupils. The freedom of choice of schools is a highly valued principle in the Netherlands.

Because parents use this freedom to avoid schools with high proportions of minority pupils, the pupils of several hundred Dutch primary schools are all from minority groups. This development is seen as a social problem even though the quality of education in these 'concentration schools' often seems to be quite high.

Another recognised problem is the unemployment rate among minority adults. The unemployment rate among Turkish, Moroccan and Caribbean adults is 33-35% compared to 11% for native Dutch adults. Even when educational qualifications and variables such as age, place of residence and length of stay are taken into consideration, the unemployment rates among minority adults should not exceed 13-16%. For a society that has a tradition of tolerance and in which open racism is not accepted, these figures are embarrassing. Several economic reports have stated that discrimination on the labour market is the most probable explanation for the high unemployment rate among minority adults.

The Dutch Government has announced that it will soon introduce new policies to improve the situation of ethnic minority groups. The figures presented here concerning the educational situation and the labour market situation of minorities show that new initiatives are much needed. Whatever these may be, one may safely prophesy that the road leading to a multi-cultural Dutch society in which ethnic minorities have equal chances is still a long one.

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# AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH

### by Arthur Delbridge

***The National Policy on Languages (1987) gives full recognition to the national character of Australian English. But what is Australian English? Who are its speakers? Is it the only English among the languages of Australia? When and how did it begin? How different is it from other Englishes? Is it any good?***

Approaching such questions I resort to the linguistic argument that the name 'English', or 'English Language', represents a highly abstract language system which is realised in different communities in different ways, in the form of dialects. 'English' is the sum total of its dialects, and there is no community, no region for which the 'English language' is the dialect: no such thing as 'pure' English, but only London English, Oxford English, Scottish English, or (if you lump a number of these together) British English, which at this higher level of abstraction is in contrast with American English, South African English, Australian English, and so on. Australian English is the one that evolved here, out of some dialects of British English and under the pressure of the distinctive physical and social forces which have shaped Australian culture and given it its identity, forces which have included some of the other Englishes. Australian English may be grouped with British, American, Canadian and New Zealand Englishes in that they are all native varieties: they all evolved through a relatively undisturbed succession of native speakers for whom English has been the mother tongue.

***There is no such thing as 'pure' English***

Looked at this way, Australian English may be defined as that dialect of English spoken by native-born Australians. But unlike British English it has to be called a transported native variety, as does American, in that it began with the transportation of British people to a new country, in which its evolution has gone on more or less unaffected by other languages already established there. The pattern of settlement in America, in time and space, produced a reasonably large number of dialects within American English. But the settlement and development of Australia has resulted in only one dialect for the whole country, a homogeneity of language that is often remarked on by dialect scholars.

The word 'dialect' is used here in its technical sense, of a regional, temporal or social variety of a language, and not in that more popular sense of a low, uncultivated, usually countrified variety, much lower in prestige than some supposed standard form of the language. Any 'standard' variety of a language is simply a distinct, socially favoured dialect: all dialects of a language are for their time and place equally good.

Among the first settlers in the new colony in 1788 there were doubtless many dialects spoken, with London English predominating, and possibly two or three sociolects covering the range of 'high' and 'low' usage. But the shock of the new environment certainly began to show up in these dialects in the form of new words to express the novelties and horrors of life in Sydney town and the growing colony. Transportation thus changed the transported language immediately, and by the time the number of children born in the colony (the 'currency' children) began to exceed the number of those brought in by ship (called 'sterling'), it was not just the new rods that marked the emergence of the Australian dialect: it was the accent too. By about 1830 visitors to the colony had commented on the distinctive speech of the native-born Australian population.

Australian English has been developing steadily since then, for most of the time not encouraged by the educators, and inhibited by the cultural cringe; yet spurred on by the positive forces of nationalism, the indigenous arts of literature and painting (tutored and supported as they were by European influences), by urbanisation and the intellectual growth of the cities, the popular press (especially the *Bulletin*), and university education.

In 1898 there appeared a dictionary with the title *Austral English*, edited by Edward E. Morris, Professor of English French and German Languages and Literatures at Melbourne University. His intention was to show what new words and new uses of old words had been 'added to the English language by reason of the fact that those who speak English have taken up their abode in Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand.' (p.xi) He followed the historical principles and scholarly practices of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and gave full accounts of the naming of Australian flora and fauna, geographical features, and convict system, land use, occupations, and (to a degree) social structures. Not much, on the other hand about Australian idiom, particularly colloquialism. And the emphasis was on what had been added (in a sense not defined) to English. The notion that a new dialect had emerged was not even considered.

***The settlement and development of Australia has resulted in only one dialect for the whole country***

For that we had to wait for a journalist, Sidney J. Baker, whose book *The Australian Language* (1945) echoed H.L. Mencken's *American Language* (1919) in leaving the word English right out of the title, and plumping for the autonomy of the national idiom, in a vigorous, unacademic style. Even more we had to wait for Professor A.G. Mitchell, of Sydney University, to challenge the conservative view widely held in the community that any change from standard British English must be a change for the worse, and that if there is such a thing as Australian English it must be a pretty crook sort of English. Mitchell threw down the gauntlet: 'There is nothing wrong with Australian speech', and was bruised by the force of the outrage his challenge produced in the community. That was in 1942. But his patient work in establishing Australian English as a subject for university research and teaching, his advocacy of Australian English as the natural language of our literature, education and broadcasting, his standing as a scholar whose achievements in many fields of literature, philology and linguistics had international recognition, all these helped Australians to acknowledge the legitimacy of Australian English as the natural medium for those who had received it by mother-tongue transmission, to be used in all the main streams of Australian life, both private and public, and confidently in international life as well.

But how different is it from all those other dialects of world English? That seems an important question for us, but it is not the question we have most anxiously asked: 'how different from standard British English?' For as A.A. Phillips wrote in 1950 in his *Meanjin* paper on the cultural cringe: 'The core of the difficulty is the fact that, in the back of the Australian mind, there sits the minatory Englishman'.

American English has never been the subject of any such anxious question here, in spite of the thunder of its population numbers, five times those of the United Kingdom and at least fifteen times ours. For Australians tend to believe – or say they believe – that any linguistic influence from America must be bad. Even though Australian English, like British, borrows rather heavily from American, any usage that is apparently American in origin has a strike against it for linguistically conservative Australians (which is most of us!).

So the primary question, though not the best, is 'how different is Australian English from British English?', that is, the sort of English represented in, say, the Concise Oxford Dictionary.

An answer can come only partly in terms of what a concise dictionary might tell, for dictionaries are only word-books, and there is much more to a language than its words. It is the Australian accent and voice quality that has attracted most attention in the past, and caused so many Australians to feel ashamed of their own speech. One stereotype of the Australian accent has from early on been sharply criticised in terms that convey either a moral or an aesthetic judgment: 'an awful nasal twang', 'harsh, unmusical and unpleasant to the ear', 'lip laziness', 'slovenly in speech', 'ugly vowel sounds', 'this Australian monotone', 'malformed vowels', 'missing consonants', 'mumble', 'drawl', 'gabble', 'the most brutal maltreatment that has ever been inflicted on the mother-tongue of the great English-speaking nations'.

The litany is never silenced, though it has had its crescendos and fortissimos. None of its phrases relate to the language system by which its writers and speakers convey their messages, but rather only to the informative function of utterance, that function by which a listener learns something about the speaker, regardless of whether the speaker intends this to happen. 'You really want me for my bad speech, don't you', says a university student when invited to be tape-recorded as part of an advertising survey.

***It is the Australian accent and voice quality that has caused so many Australians to feel ashamed of their own speech..***

All the dialects of English, even the most prestigious, have had their detractors, whose contempt is bred from familiarity, or unfamiliarity, envy, distain, shame, or ignorance. Australian English has had more than its share of them, especially since so many have themselves been speakers of it – even teachers of it, or in it (since for our schools it is the normal medium of instruction).

But if one looks more objectively at the language system itself, in its phonology, syntax, vocabulary and idiom, what is there that is distinctive?

## Phonology

The vowel and consonants of spoken Australian English are similar to those found in the 'Received pronunciation of English, but the realisations of them are different. The vowels are systematically different, being fronted, relative to those of the Received pronunciation. But there is a pattern of variation within the Australian vowel system itself, usually characterised by the terms Cultivated, General and Broad, with a range of interesting correlations with personal and socio-economic characteristics of the speakers. All native speakers of Australian English find a place within the spectrum, though most of them can shift their vowel range within it to meet the apparent requirements of particular social situations. There are no gross regional variations throughout the land, in spite of its great size. English-speaking migrants speak either another dialect of English, native or non-native, or some form of English with a foreign accent as they move through a series of interlanguages towards a place in the spectrum of Australian English.

***There is an inevitability about the distinctiveness of the Australian lexicon, for it simply reflects the life around it.***

There are some more minor features of Australian phonology: a tendency (brilliantly parodied in Strine) to omit, assimilate or neutralise some vowels and consonants; and some intonation features, especially the high rising tone on declarative clauses associated (according to Horvath, 1985) with the social characteristics: teenager, female, lower working class, and either Greek or Anglo-Celtic.

## Vocabulary

Two hundred years of Australian have not just added local words, local names to the stock of world English. They have in marked degree changed the lexical fabric through and through. The familar words at the core of the English lexicon get redefined under the influence of local conditions, forming relations with hitherto unrelated semantic networks. Thus 'station' got itself distinctively linked with farms, properties, holdings, ranches, etc. through its colonial use in reference to a military outpost established for the employment of convict labour. A 'squatter' was originally one, especially an ex-convict, who occupied Crown land without legal title; later it got mixed up with class, wealth, responsibility, and the squattocracy. A 'muster' was an act of assembling convicts for inspection and identification, but before long it was distinctively applied to livestock.

There is an inevitability about the distinctiveness of the Australian lexicon, for it simply reflects the life around it. So we make up words to suit: 'bottom-of-the-harbour', 'bikeway', 'medifraud', 'rogaining'. Even when it comes to borrowing, we borrow only some of what is available. Australian English has powerful neighbours, and has but 13 million speakers, compared with about 55 million in Britain, 275 million in the United States. We borrow words and phrases from these, just as they borrow from each other, but in our own way. For example, we make our own set of relations between 'chipped potatoes', 'potato chips', 'chips' and 'French fries'.

From the start we've taken words and names from the Aboriginal languages, and we do it again now with words from the non-English community languages brought here through recent migration. The current growth of the lexicography of Australian English is a response to the expansion of its vocabulary as well as the distinctiveness of it.

## Grammar

Grammar is likely to be adapted to both medium and register. The grammar used in an Australian monograph on an academic subject is not going to look distinctively Australian. Our writers and editors possibly consult Fowler (1972) and the *Chicago Style Manual* (1982) even more than the *Style Manual* published by the Australian Government (1988). But in less formal registers Australian English can accommodate non-standard usage just as other dialects do, especially in speech. Most of our commoner non-standard features, like multiple negatives, duplication of subject, deprecated tense forms, etc., are also found commonly in other dialects.

***Australian English is most distinctive when what is being written or spoken about is itself close to Australian social experience.***

Some speakers and writers use non-standard grammar by habit, not knowing that it is non-standard. But our writers of fiction (among others) use them deliberately, especially in dialogue that develops character or informs the reader about social backgrounds. Australian English is most distinctive when what is being written or spoken about is itself close to Australian social experience, and there the occurrence of idiom, colloquialism and non-standard grammar should occasion no surprise, and usually no regret.

## Idiom

Idiom manifests the lexical and phrasal peculiarities of a dialect, and the abundance of these in Australian English is reflected in how ready observers are to comment on them, especially those in the colloquial repertoire of the 'dinkum Aussie', like 'spinebash', 'crack hardy', 'shook on', 'Joe Blakes', 'Noahs', 'mad as a cut snake', 'shoot through like a Bondi tram', 'poke borak', 'mossies', 'flat out like a lizard drinking', to give a very random sample. Listing them, and using them to give local linguistic color have long been favoured occupations of lexicographers and novelists respectively.

## Style

For those of us who can't be said to have a literary style, the word relates only to questions of choice, in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and hyphenation, and more broadly to the choice of words and grammatical forms. Is it 'gaol', or 'jail', 'organise' or 'organize', 'program' or 'programme', 'honor' or 'honour'? Which is right? Which should be preferred, and when? Such are the questions of style, obviously important to writers and editors, to school-teachers, journalists, broadcasters, actors, perhaps to anyone who wants to be judged a good speaker or writer of English. But of Australian English? The question has certainly been asked, and there are several facts that point to a positive answer:

- since 1966 the Australian government has published its *Style Manual*, now in its fourth edition, setting standards for Commonwealth government publications and for the guidance of authors, editors and printers whether in the service of the government or not;
- every major Australian newspaper has its own style-guide for its journalists to follow;
- the Australian Broadcasting Corporation maintains its own Standing Committee on Spoken English, to advise on style and to recommend pronunciations to be used by its broadcasters. All questions, whether of pronunciation, usage, or style are referred for a first opinion to an Australian dictionary, not a British or American one.

These are but three of many facts which suggest that Australian institutions give full recognition to Australian English as the national dialect for all the purposes that they serve, and that there already is a distinctive style or set of styles adapted to the full range of uses and situations throughout the nation.

## The sources of information

The assertions of this paper could only be made because there has been a good deal of research done on English in Australia, with dozens of postgraduate theses completed, learned papers written, conferences held, and monographs published. The two principal linguistics associations recognise Australian English as one of their research and conference concerns, along with Aboriginal languages, Aboriginal English, and the National Policy on Languages.

But what about the interests of people who don't have ready access to the professional literature, but still need sources of information about Australian English?

***Aboriginal and migrant writing in English is adding not only to the traditional literary images of Australia, but also the the life of Australian English.***

From time to time there are books of essays published, presenting discussion of recent research. The latest of these is *Australian English The Language of a New Society* (1989, edited by Peter Collins and David Blair), with 24 essays by various authors. Of style manuals, there are at least four generally available. *The Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers* (fourth edition, 1988) is the best-selling publication of the Australian Government Publishing Service, and claims in its Foreword that 'it has long been regarded as the standard work of reference for all authors, editors and printers in Australia' (p.v). A personal view by a great Australian may be found in Stephen Murray Smith's *Right Words: A Guide to English Usage in Australia* (1987). In 1982 the ABC published *Watch Your Language*, a collection of opinions on aspects of usage by members of the ABC's Standing Committee on Spoken English. And in 1989 there appeared the *Macquarie Student Writers Guide* (Pam Peters, General Editor), which provides both a writing workshop and an A-Z guide to language and writing.

Australia is now well provided with dictionaries focussed on Australian English, as well as a number of books, including the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1988, second edition, 20 volumes), which record and label items of Australian usage even though their main focus is British or American. Oxford has also published its *Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1987, ed G.W. Turner), and most importantly W.S. Ramson's *Australian National Dictionary* (1988), a large volume dealing with some 6000 Australianisms and their origins by the familiar historical principles that so distinguished the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

The *Macquarie Dictionary*, first published in 1981, was the first dictionary (to quote my own words from its prefatory pages) 'ever to present a set of entries for a comprehensive word list in which all the pronunciations, all the spellings, and all the definitions of meaning are taken from the use of English in Australia, and in which Australian English becomes the basis of comparison with other national varieties of English.' By now the Macquarie stable includes a major and revolutionary thesaurus, and a set of matching volumes, dictionary and thesaurus, each designed for the needs of different types of readers – Concise, Pocket, Junior, Little, My First, and Budget. Its acceptance and endorsement within the Australian community has been gratifying, reassuring the editors that their notion of an Australian dictionary for the Australian people was not only sound, but certain to succeed if it were but well made, as I believe it has been judged to be.

The colloquial side of Australian English had been pretty well explored long before there was a dictionary for the whole language. It was prominent in Baker's *Australian Language* (1945), and since Baker's time there have been a number of descriptive books (eg Bill Hornadge, 1980, *The Australian Slanguage*). The best dictionary account of colloquial Australianisms is by G.A. Wilkes, in his *Dictionary of Australian Colloquialisms* (1987), richly supported with citations mainly drawn from Australian literature and arranged in historical order. The *Macquarie Dictionary of Australian Colloquial Language* (1984/88) is not restricted to colloquialisms that are strictly Australian in origin, but lists and defines colloquialisms that are current or known to have been current in Australian usage.

It has not escaped the attention of scholars in other parts of the world that Australian English is by now pretty well documented. The strengthening of English as a language for Europe has meant that scholars and teachers of English in Germany, France, Poland, etc. are not content to have studied first British and then American languages and literatures. They look for others to take on: the Englishes of the Commonwealth, the literatures in English written by non-native English speakers, here in Australia (for example) by Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kate Walker), Mudooroo Narogin (Colin Johnson), and by first generation immigrant authors from Germany, Holland, Korea, Greece, Poland, and others. Aboriginal and migrant writing in English is adding not only to the traditional literary images of Australia, but also to the life of Australian English, so that however well documented it might seem to be now, these and other forces are constantly at work on it, renewing, adding, subtly changing; complicating the images, blurring the distinctions between native and non-native, disturbing the stereotypes, and ensuring that linguists and lexicographers can never say of their work, 'It is finished'.

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# LANGUAGE PLANNING IN AFRICA

**by John Povey**

The African continent is multilingual to a degree that challenges the imagination. Perhaps half the known languages of the world are found there deriving from four entirely distinct linguistic roots. This induces a complexity that can only be rivalled, though in a far more limited way, by Papua New Guinea. Some of the languages are so restricted that they are likely to be doomed to extinction. Others are spoken by millions and extend widely as lingua franca across trading regions. This diversity presents a consistent problem to the independent African governments who wish to modernise. They need to centralise their administrative authority, a process that requires the adoption of an efficient, single language of nationwide acceptability. The attempt to achieve such a status is a source of tension within the society. Any choice amongst the available language options brings an unfair balance of advantage or disadvantage to some peoples.

The background to this lies in the history of the continent. The present-day African states still reflect their colonial origins. In Africa, the natural process of nation building by absorption, conquest and population movement, that had generated European countries, was not allowed to occur. Empires such as Benin, Ghana, and Songhai were forged by lateral expansion in an east west extension which made the more logical direction of growth across the centre of West Africa. This pattern was dramatically interrupted by colonialist intervention, mounted from the sea coast. The obligation to trade with sea-faring outsiders led the peculiar and eccentric designs of the borders of most African states, with a major port and an intrusive and exploitative north-south railway into the interior. East-west movement was minimized because the change of trading routes focused on the coast. The awkward, resulting boundaries were established by competitive Europeans, ignorant of geography and indifferent to cultural logic. Peoples with long communal histories were separated by arbitrary lines largely determined in Berlin with the signing of the Convention in 1885 and subsequently ratified at the Treaty of Paris in 1897. Within these occupied territories the accepted practices of the various conquerors were imposed, at least upon the local elites.

Independence brought no condemnation of these irrational frontiers and there were no expectations that they might be modified and reformed. Rather, United Nations Organisation (UNO) and Organization of African Unity (OAU) proclamations confirmed that the inherited territories would be deemed sacrosanct across the continent. Secessionist rebellions, such as the battle of Katanga province against Zaire or the Ibo state Biafra against the Nigerian government were in part aimed at recasting compound nations into separate territories of greater legitimacy. Their challenges were sternly put down with specific international support. The status quo, though recognized to be unsatisfactory was to be permanent. The complications deriving from extensive readjustment would require a total revision of the map and vastly increase the number of small separate countries, often with even less viable economies than those already existing. Governments determined to secure their own continuing authority were forced to accommodate their multilingual and multicultural populations in their efforts to establish and sustain a unitary contemporary state.

> ***In Africa multilingualism signals divisions and exposes to a far greater degree, the ever-present threat of separatism within the nation.***

The problems in Africa were more fundamental than those of other multilingual societies such as Canada, Switzerland or India which had longer histories of integration and a more reasonable geographic structure. In such cases the chief difficulties were little more than to the additional costs of the educational and administrative duplications which would not be required in a monolingual state. Concessions were made to individual social groups as part of the normal practice of balancing political needs and pressures.

In Africa where the states have only recent and often questionable legitimacy, multilingualism signals divisions and exposes to a far greater degree, the ever-present threat of separatism within the nation. It would not be too fanciful to say that a country such as Nigeria originally existed as a concept of the British Colonial Office rather than as a product of West African history. For this reason, the government cannot assume any ready sense of national identity and may well see the variety of languages as much as a political threat as a cultural resource.

Several theoretical options could be suggested. The most obvious one was the forcible imposition of one of the local languages, either the most widely spoken or one that had some prestige status perhaps by being the language of the capital or the mother tongue of the president. This has been the policy of the USSR towards its minority territories. In some cases this was attempted in Africa. Amharic, the language of the capital was imposed in Ethiopia. Lingaia, the language of President Mobutu is given special preference in Zaire. In Togo, President Eyadema seeks to stress Kabiye in the schools. Even where such a policy was introduced by authoritarian regimes there was both passive and active resistance. Ethiopia suffered a full civil war. Most African governments realized that they were directly related only to a minority of their highly fragmented population and realized that the remainder had to be reassured that their claims for equal attention and equal justice would not be overlooked. The recognition of their languages was one of the most obvious signals of their continuing political significance and thus sustained their acceptance of association with the present system.

Ideally a unifying language was all but a necessity and few countries could see an African one fulfilling this role. Tanzania and Zimbabwe were fortunate in having inherited relatively simple linguistic situations and were able to establish the majority languages, Swahili and Shona, as national languages for education. But even these countries pretended a greater degree of uniformity than was actually present and several minorities, though ignored, remained disgruntled even while their small numbers did not permit expression of resentment. Evidence of their existence constituted a potential challenge. In other cases, the predominance of a single language was seen as threatening rather than convenient. It was precisely the size of the Gikuyu majority that rendered their language unacceptable and explains the unexpected Kenyan decision to employ Swahili for national communication.

***In other cases, the predominance of a single language was seen as threatening rather than convenient.***

The search for a functional lingua franca that did not, by its very existence, signal prejudice and preferential bias brought about the consideration of a European language for this national purpose in newly independent states. Initially this may seem strange. After all, the old Roman adage had it that 'the language of the conqueror is the language of a slave.' Duke William of Normandy proved this thesis to the English! The formal renunciation of all evidence of the oppressive colonialism should have been matched by an equally determined extirpation of the foreign language that had been an accompanying imposition. In fact it was seen to be essential for the maintenance of a unified country. It was more culturally neutral than any other, meaning that it was in practice no more offensive to one group than another. It was simultaneously foreign to everyone and yet also familiar to all since it had been in use for a century and was learned in the schools. It had already demonstrated its utility both inside the country and for external relations. These advantages outweighed the stigma of its origin.

***In most cases the ex-colonial language became quite simply the national language.***

Strictly speaking any external language might have fulfilled the African need. It was probable that the ex-colonial language would be selected since it was already deeply woven into the structure of the state. It was the means of communication within the government and the courts, it had been the vehicle for formal education, and it was required for access into the privileged ranks and advance into the cash economy. Those who could use the foreign tongue were immediately advanced into positions of comparative power, and were relied upon by the colonial administrators who made little attempt to acquire any competence in the local tongue.

Language competence became the mark of an elite. They were often educated in the mother country and absorbed, along with other formal skills, some appreciation of the colonial culture. These were the natural recipients at the handing over of power. They were equally most likely to affirm the advantages of maintaining the predominance of the colonial language as the chief means of communication within their new countries.

The connections between the new countries and the past occupiers were rarely curtailed by the changed political status at independence. Links of trade and communication remained. The greatest potential for aid and investment came from the colonial powers. For this reason, in most cases the ex-colonial language became quite simply the national language: Spanish in Equatorial Guinea, French in Gabon, Portuguese in Mozambique, English in Ghana. The constitution of Uganda states quite unequivocally 'The national language of Uganda is English.' This attitude was recently reaffirmed by a similar declaration from the recently installed SWAPO government of Namibia.

Such a continuity of preference was maintained even when logic seemed scarcely served by the decision. In Angola, Portuguese was embraced as the national language although the decision was hard to justify in other than historical terms. Few had acquired that tongue since even elementary education had been most grudgingly provided and illiteracy predominated amongst the population. It was those few Portuguese-educated who constituted the new power structure at independence. Schools were required to embrace Portuguese, although Portugal was too impoverished and at least temporarily antagonistic, to be courted for assistance, and the language would isolate Angola from its neighbours.

Colonial languages were so entrenched that their retention could not be regarded as a transitory state during which some alternative but indigenous language was being developed. Obviously it is by no means impossible for any language to develop and so encompass new social circumstances. This is a conventional pattern of growth. With sufficient political will, vast changes can be accommodated, as for example, when biblical Hebrew was modernized to become the language of a contemporary economy. To some extent, this is happening with Swahili because of the most vigorous investment in publishing and education by the Tanzanian government.

Nowhere else in Africa is this process occurring. For both educational and cultural reasons several governments are planning or attempting to provide mother tongue schooling at the elementary level. This policy is economical and has been proved to aid early learning, but the advantages are not absolute.

Implementation has been tentative because such apparently attractive options seem to reinforce separatism. It is most revealing that only South Africa has persisted in requiring mother tongue education for all groups throughout the country. In that situation the potential for separatism is sought to prevent black political unity – a case of doing the right thing for the wrong reason!

***Colonial languages were so entrenched that their retention could not be regarded as a transitory stage during which some alternative but indigenous language was being developed.***

In general, African languages are not expanding into newer functions because alternatives are too readily available. It is easier, for example, to conduct discussions about an engineering project in a European language common to all concerned, than to adapt the local one to the required purpose. After all, their negotiations are likely to assume that the engineers learned their profession in the European language which they share. They have no need to resort to a local language, even if it were mutually known and capable of incorporating the context of their profession.

***African languages are not expanding into newer functions because alternatives are too readily available.***

For the last two decades the formula outlined above constituted standard practice. African countries were united internally by the use of an ex-colonial language for binding communication while the local languages suffered varying degrees of acceptance or neglect. Within each country, it was clear that most of them no longer depended for useful survival on governmental planning since so little national action directly influenced local usage. A case in point is the attitude to Pidgin which is ignored as a useful medium because it has no official status. It is nevertheless used as the prime means of communication along the whole coast while at the same time being rejected as a potential medium, though its presence is obvious. Its function is assumed to be primitive and so it is publicly scorned as crude and vulgar. Now a completely new consideration requires a fresh estimation of the linguistic context—the recognition of the phenonemon that English has become a world language and for the first time, a single tongue is virtually a necessity for international interaction.

The dominant status of English derives from British colonialism, dominion settlement and American hegemony. This explains its geographic spread but there are other aspects. It is unscholarly to imagine there is a hierarchy amongst languages. It is taught that each one ideally serves the society it is part of. If so, English most effectively serves modern capitalism and there may be more than historical reasons for its present prominence. Much global communication is conducted in that language. Considerable discussion might elucidate the origins and nature of this phenomenon, but its existence and its political and technological results are unquestionable. Once merely an equal amongst other languages, the predominance of English is now readily apparent, urged on perhaps by the incorrigible monolingualism of its native speakers. In the past, French was the language of diplomacy but it has now lost that prestige. Even Russian power at its height made little linguistic impression other than on its reluctant satellites. Japanese commercial expansion has not been accompanied by the imposition of the Japanese language.

The enormous growth of English usage derives less from its use by mother tongue speakers than from the more recent expansion of its role as a second language throughout the world. Business between managers who do not share a common mother tongue is most likely to be conducted in that English which they have both had to acquire through formal learning.

If one applies this perception to Africa a further difficulty develops for the new states. It can readily be agreed that any European language solves a dilemma within a country by providing a means of national communication. For this function there is no hierarchy of utility. Portuguese functions as well as French. But if a need for a language of wider communication is required, then a clear hierarchy presents itself and priorities appear. English, for that purpose, is essential as is recognized in countries as diverse as Korea and Israel. In such countries the educational solution is for some measure of bilingualism. This may only achieve a degree of full communicative function for some of the population but English is still a compulsory subject in the schools. This may seem roughly the situation in Ghana or Zambia but there English serves simultaneously as the national language of the country. A closer comparison would be with the lusophone or francophone African countries such as Angola or Togo, where the national language (Portuguese and French) no longer provides an adequate means of communication with trading sources other than the ex-colonial partner. This limits them to bilateral commercial relationships at a time when any developing economy needs access to the widest possible cycle of trading. With increasing European reluctance to continue subsidizing the deficits of their old colonies, these countries are forced to seek assistance from international agencies which conduct their business predominantly in English.

The result of this situation adds yet one further layer of difficulty to the education of the African student. We are not confronted here with the comparative luxury of bilingualism; quadrilingualism, even quintilingualism, becomes the common expectation. There is an awesome sequence of mother tongue, local language, capital or trading language, French or Portuguese and now the obligation of English.

***The dominant status of English derives from British colonialism, dominion settlement and American hegemony.***

The prospect seems the more daunting because none of this list is likely to be eliminated. History precludes the substitution of English for another colonial language which would in principle be the most logical decision.

Few have yet recognized this new dimension of linguistic complexity, and so have hardly begun to advocate solutions to the costly consequences it imposes on the educational system. Yet the need for English becomes increasingly clear and it may well be that as presently designed the existing school system cannot accommodate further responsibility.

***Strictly speaking any external language might have fulfilled the African need.***

Perhaps the most cost-effective solution must be constructed outside the classroom, to abandon expectations of any universal training and concentrate upon an upwardly mobile elite for the immediate future. This program would draw upon the popular methodology of English for Special Purposes. This technique, by limiting the subject matter and thus the range of vocabulary, provides for accelerated focused language acquisition. Overload in the classroom would be reduced by reserving English for post-school training. Costs could be passed on to employers or fees would be acceptable if the new knowledge was going to translate directly into increased salaries. Areas with essential international connections like banking, air transport, freight and communications would be priorities. Multi-national corporations would also assume English competence for all but the most menial positions.

As a transitional stage this may be the most adequate solution, indeed the only one that has the merit of being a practical possibility. It is by no means ideal since it fosters and magnifies the old colonial aberration of the linguistic elite. In providing for the advantage of some, one may well be causing the disadvantage for many by creating a non-English-speaking proletariat divorced from financial upward mobility by lack of access to the language of profit. Language competence can alter the basis of the class structure with all the social imbalance that this can bring.

As always, language is at the heart of all forms of human organization and the problems faced in this regard by the African states continue to retard their advance into self-sufficiency and secure prosperity.

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# VOICES OF THE GENERATIONS TO COME: WHAT FUTURE FOR MINORITY IMMIGRANT LANGUAGES?

### by John Gatt-Rutter and Francesco Cavallaro

***The appearance of the National Policy on Languages in 1987 (Lo Bianco), and its endorsement by the Federal Government, have transformed the nature of the debate on language policy in Australia, though this has not been immediately apparent. The sharp focus on language issues goes well beyond the previous vague and unsatisfactory notion of multiculturalism. Issues of language account for a large part of the multicultural debate – identify those, and the residual areas of multiculturalism also become easily identifiable and negotiable.***

***The present paper concerns itself with minority immigrant languages – that is, all immigrant languages except English, and therefore will not touch on many other important issues addressed by Lo Bianco. The National Policy on Languages divides the policy agenda regarding speakers of languages other than English neatly into two hemispheres: one is the provision of English for all; the other is for mother tongue support services in the minority languages.***

We will not dwell here on the undoubted importance of enabling all Australians to master English as a means towards full participation in the Australian polity and towards ensuring national cohesion and a sense of collective identity. Nor will we dwell on the magnitude of the task yet to be done in this respect. Certain researchers have recently drawn attention to the equity considerations of equipping all Australians linguistically for full access to employment, services and the political process (see Jayasuriya 1988, 1989; Bullivant 1980, 1981, 1982; Edwards 1984), and the Lo Bianco document defines this area well.

Minority languages also receive plenty of attention in the National Policy on Languages. The need is indicated for further development of translator and interpreter services for dealings with public administration in the law courts and the health and welfare services. The language implications of safety at work and of care and companionship for the aged are considered. Language maintenance for all is recommended.

The arguments for this last policy objective – language maintenance – are diverse, and are also germane to the central thrust of this paper, which presents a case for maintaining the language of origin not merely of Australians now living, but of future generations also. It is therefore worth rehearsing these arguments here.

It wasn't too long ago that researchers believed that being bilingual meant dividing one's brain between two languages and therefore halving one's mental abilities. The opposite is now the accepted view and is well-supported by research evidence.

There are numerous cognitive advantages to be gained from being bilingual (see Lambert 1980, p 7 and Hakuta and Diaz for a recent review of the area). However, a distinction has been made between immersion in a second language leading to additive bilingualism, and submersion, leading to subtractive bilingualism (see Lambert and Taylor 1981, in Hakuta and Diaz 1984 for a more detailed discussion). There has been some evidence that if a child is submerged in a new language environment before he has a chance to develop his language skills in his mother tongue, the child's cognitive growth could be negatively affected. This is the situation most children of non-English background find themselves in when they reach school age and find no mother tongue support. The child's cognitive development is thus one of the major justifications for mother tongue maintenance and education through the mother tongue.

Mother tongue is also a key criterion for membership of an ethnic group. Other criteria may include ancestry, religion, physiognomy and many aspects of social culture and behaviour

(Fishman 1977, in Giles & Johnson 1981, p 202). Most ethnic groups have a distinct language or dialect and these linguistic characteristics can be necessary attributes for membership of the group. Giles, Taylor and Bourhis (1973) and Smolicz (1979) propose that ethnic group members identify more closely with those who share their language than with those who share other major aspects of their cultural background, such as religion. Giles and Johnson (1981 p 203; 1987 p 72) stress the fact that even when there are other strong and clear criteria for ethnic group membership (such as skin colour), an ethnic language variety often remains a criterial attribute.

Many language varieties may be viewed as acquired characteristics rather than inherited or ascriptive (that is, determined by birth). Therefore, language is potentially a stronger cue to an individual's own sense of ethnic belonging than inherited characteristics in the eyes of others, since acquired characteristics may be attributed internally rather than externally. In other words, while paternity (inherited characteristics) may be the key to ethnicity for the individuals themselves, patrimony (acquired characteristics) may be the guide as to how ethnic others perceive them to be (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977).

***Mother tongue is a key criterion for membership of an ethnic group.***

Since language is generally a salient dimension of ethnicity, and, with religion, is the most important articulation of identity both for an individual and for an ethnic group, communicating in a language other than that of one's own group may lead to a sense of cultural anomie and threaten or subtract from one's sense of ethnic identity; this is particularly likely for groups occupying a low power position when using the dominant group's language (Lambert 1979, 1980, in Giles & Johnson 1981 p 213). Because of this, many ethnic groups consider the loss of their language as the loss of their identity as groups. Wardhaugh (1983 p 184) goes as far as saying that when language has a profound symbolic value to the group (and some groups make it a clear mark of national identity), its loss is seen as the loss of their most precious asset and may be followed by complete assimilation. One of the questions for this paper – perhaps its key question – is whether such assimilation is a desirable outcome.

We may remark that most ethnic groups deny the possibility that one can still be Italian, Greek, Chinese, Vietmanese, etc., without speaking Italian, Greek etc.. The strongest argument saying that this is possible is the case of Welsh, Scots or Irish. The argument here is that these ethnic groups have remained distinct from each other and from other English speakers even though they speak English. However the history of these groups cannot be compared with that of immigrant minorities such as those in Australia. The 'ethnic' differences between them are also far less than between Anglo-Celts and say, Breton Celts, let alone Slovaks or Sikhs. Moreover, insofar as the Welsh, Scots and Irish have kept a distinct ethnic identity, this is reflected in the many ethnic markers in their use of the English language by which they have created their own distinct and characteristic varieties of English. By the same token, it is notable, that the notion of an Australian national identity is invariably associated with the English language, and particularly, of course, with one specific inflexion of the English language. There is plenty of evidence that those who do not speak English with this inflexion are not readily accepted as fully 'ethnic' Australians.

Losing an immigrant language can mean for its speakers to lose touch with their cultural heritage. It seems evident that a person cannot function fully as a person outside her culture. Just as an Australian requires contact with Australian culture, a Scots Australian requires contact with both Scottish and Australian culture, a Ukrainian Australian with Ukrainian as well as Australian culture, and so on. And Australia indeed provides considerable support and encouragement for cultural maintenance of this kind. The National Policy on Languages also calls for the possibility of cultural development through the mother tongue at all educational levels – a provision extremely difficult to deliver in languages as diverse, say, as Maltese and Estonian. There are further implications in this argument about the maintenance of minority immigrant languages and cultures, and these will be pursued below. It seems clear, however, that maintaining the individual's sense of ethnic and cultural identity is another strong equity-based argument for language maintenance.

For the aged, language maintenance means the presence of mother tongue speakers to provide care and companionship to those who progressively lose their ability to communicate in English, if they have acquired the language in adulthood, and revert to the language learnt in childhood. Changing patterns of immigration -for instance, the slowing down of immigration from Europe – may lead to a shortage of mother tongue speakers to care for these people. This is another problem apparently not easy to overcome, and another reason for encouraging the maintenance of minority immigrant languages.

## Languages as a national resource

There are three main areas of need then, involving the languages of the ethnic minorities – the cognitive development of the child, the cultural integrity of the adult, and the care of the aged. However, this paper seeks to present the language issue not just in terms of problems to be solved, of needs to be fulfilled, of services to be provided – in other words, not just, or not primarily, as a burden on the national economy.

Australia's multiplicity of languages need not be seen as a liability at all.

There is no reason why it should not be seen as an asset, a very valuable asset. Indeed, Lo Bianco presents Australia's languages not only as a problem for government and social administration, but also as a resource: not merely in terms of social need, but also in terms of opportunity.

This wealth of languages holds many benefits for society, one of which is the richness accruing to all Australians from the presence of many ways of looking at the world represented by many different languages and cultures. In terms of multiculturalism Australia has already benefited enormously in colour, variety and sophistication. Some of this increase in liveliness has had its correlative linguistic benefits, but so far these have been all too small.

**These 'Australian' languages are all actual or potential resources, yet they are allowed to decay or perish.**

This is at a time when the importance of usable language skills and of informal (that is, personal) as well as formal links for Australia's international political relations with other countries and for its overseas trade is becoming increasingly evident. Ingram (1989 p 6) reports a situation where business and industrial enterprises needing staff fluent in Japanese bring Japanese nationals to serve these needs. Or take the message of a German Trade Minister to Britain which is also very relevant to the Australian situation:

> *'If you wish to buy from us, there is no need to speak German, but if you wish to sell to us . . .' (Kinder 1989, p 78)*

These considerations are represented in National Policy on the Languages in the objective of 'a second language for all'.

The present emphasis on East Asian languages for commercial purposes partly obscures the need for other languages. After all, Japanese and Korean are not significant settler languages in Australia. However, it would be shortsighted to overlook the immediate or potential value of other languages which are strongly represented in the Australian community. To take just one random but important example, Vietnam's economy is ailing at present, but it might be flourishing ten or twenty years from now, and Australia may bitterly regret its present neglect of Vietnamese as a language resource. As for Spanish, French, German, Italian, Arabic, Greek, etc., their importance for commerce, science and culture cannot be overstated.

Ermini and Halevi (1989 p 10) stress 'the need [for Australia] to diversify'. They argue:

> *'A better knowledge of Italy in general, and of its economic strength in relation to Europe in particular, can help Australia's policy makers to diversify not only their trading horizons, but also their cultural horizons. In fact it is fair to say that in Australia today there is a direct relation between the lack of diversification of its trade and the virtual monoculturalism of its business and political classes, both a legacy of its dependency on Great Britain.'*

The case for contemporary Italian has been richly illuminated in a recent book, Understanding Italy – Language, Culture, Commerce: An Australian Perspective, (Bettoni and Lo Bianco 1989). This book highlights the European Community as one of Australia's major trading partners and the recent increase in trade between Italy and Australia (Rossetto 1989, p 25). With the imminent opening up of Europe and the creation of the European Monetary Union it is essential to establish a set of agreements with those European countries which can provide support for programs in Australia aimed at transforming its weak industrial base into a more advanced one (Ermini and Halevi 1989, p 24). Indeed, Australia stands to gain by improved contacts of all sorts with Europe. It is not generally realized, for instance, that in the field of mathematics Italy is rapidly overtaking Britain, France and Germany and will probably lead Europe by the turn of the century. The school of physics in Rome can be considered as third in the world (after the USA and USSR). Contact with these Italian schools is clearly advantageous for anyone who wishes to keep abreast of developments world-wide (Cowling 1989, p 91).

We have illustrated several points with Italian examples but there are analogous cases to be made for other languages which may appear to go by default for the simple reason that they do not enjoy an academic establishment as well developed in Australia as the Italian one. A language – Serbian, Turkish or Dutch – may be more or less important on the world scene but may still have an important role to play in and for Australia. These 'Australian' languages are all actual or potential resources, yet they are under-used and, instead of being cultivated for use, they are allowed to decay or perish.

## Generational language shift

The fundamental paradox as regards language issues here in Australia is that the country counts a very high proportion of users of languages other than English and yet manages to deploy rather low levels, both quantitatively and qualitatively, of useable language skills compared to many other countries. Its ratio of as little as one in ten people reaching survival proficiency in a second language (Ingram 1989, p 6) ranks it as one of the worst equipped linguistically among the advanced industrialized countries.

One reason for this should by now be obvious. Children born in Australia or those who moved here early in their school career, whatever their language of origin, shift in overwhelming proportion to the use of English as their dominant, if not their first language in Australia. This is tied up with the use of and knowledge of English, which holds the highest status and prestige. This means that within two or three generations at most, Australians of non-English speaking background have become native speakers of Australian English. In most cases, they will have entirely lost their language of origin, or at best have retained a very rudimentary knowledge, totally inadequate for any real and sustained communication in that language. This is what we call generational or transgenerational language shift to the majority or socially dominant language, in Australia's case, English. The evidence is all around us: we can hear it with our own ears. All the research evidence corroborates this (see Clyne 1988a, and with Jaehrling 1989, for an in-depth discussion of language shift in Australia; and Bettoni 1981, 1985, 1989 for the case of Italian in particular).

***In Australia, non-English speakers have been perceived and defined in terms of disability, and thus disabled.***

Similarly, the experience of the United States (Veltman 1984; Fishman et al. 1985; Hakuta 1986) and other countries, such as Canada (see O'Bryan, Reitz and Kuplowska 1976 and Wardhaugh 1983), show that this transgenerational language shift is the established pattern wherever mixed immigration, thinly sprinkled among the receiving population, has taken place. In other words, there is a sort of generational bridge which immigrant families cross en route from their language of origin to the language of the host country (Gatt-Rutter, 1990b). As long as there is no overwhelming local concentration of speakers of any one minority language, the shift to English is assured, and is only a matter of time.

Analysis of immigrant populations in North America shows that in the absence of coercive legislation to assimilate, the first generation's job is usually one of entrenchment, the second is characterised by bilingualism and an ever-increasing passage across group boundaries, and the third generation is essentially anglophone and culturally assimilated (Edwards 1984 p 278). O'Bryan, Reitz & Kuplowska (1976) have remarked that, for this third generation in Canada, the issue is no longer one of retaining the original language, but of acquiring it.

We can sum up the situation as regards the immigrant minorities in economic terms: firstly (since language and social culture are the biggest single investment that anyone ever makes in life), in terms of language economics and acculturation economics; secondly, and more obviously, in terms of migration and labour economics. Immigrants themselves, if they belong to a linguistic minority, bear the main cost of immigration – in terms of language disabilities and, in effect, language stripping, de-culturing, discrimination, prejudice and educational, social and economic disadvantage. Workers in the host country also bear some of the cost in terms of restraint on wage rates and bargaining power (the argument about language economics and migration economics is more fully developed in Gatt-Rutter 1990b).

What is not generally realised, however, is that despite language shift and de-culturisation among immigrant minorities, a culturally impoverished ethnicity still persists to a great extent, a sort of negative ethnicity, especially where it is marked by physical characteristics. Its hallmarks are negative self-image and low self-esteem, a sense of being discriminated against, feelings of disaffection and marginalisation, of not belonging to mainstream culture. Not surprisingly, these features are coupled with relatively high rates of unemployment and delinquency. There is a general tendency for social stratification to harden along ethnic lines, most visible in the case of Blacks and Hispanics in the United States (Martin 1976; Ayala and Dixon 1979; Torres Trueba 1979; Kringas and Lewins 1981; Castles et al. 1984). The concentration of ethnic groups within the lower strata of the population in turn contributes to the negative image of belonging to such an ethnic group. One way out of the grip of this vicious circle is suggested by Tajfel (1978, p 17), who states that official recognition of an ethnic minority language is one of the most evident and powerful confirmations of identity, giving that ethnic group dignity in separateness and a positive self-definition.

Thus two problems are involved in language shift. One is a generational problem, affecting the generational bridge from the first language to the second language. The other is the transgenerational problem of impoverished ethnicity and incomplete enculturation into the host society. Ethnic stratification is likely to be associated with both.

In situations such as that in Australia, non-English speakers have been perceived and defined in terms of disability, and thus disabled (Gatt-Rutter and Mercer 1989). They have been defined in terms of needs and because of this attitude they are placed in a position of need. This need (for language instruction in English and/or mother tongue) has always been translated into a need for funding, and therefore has been often seen as a burden upon the ethnolinguistic majority. This is a limited and static sociological perspective, for a number of reasons. The most important of these is that it is fixed only on the minority immigrant generation (MIG1) and their children (MIG2) – that is, the generational bridge, and not on the sociological continuum of the immigrant community, the host community and relations between the two. Both have concrete language needs: the immigrant community in terms of mother tongue instruction for the cognitive growth of its children, cultural continuity, positive identity and self-image and for the care of its elderly members; the host community in terms of interpreting/translating services for trading and political reasons, cultural expansion and cognitive growth through the advantages of being bilingual. The case for dual language provision for both communities is well defined by Lo Bianco (1987). By investing appropriately both communities can employ the 'enabling' strategy of using the language skills of MIG1 and MIG2 to service their needs. The language assets are there, in the community. The question remains, how to realize them.

***Minority languages are being eroded by the submersion of their speakers in a predominatly English environment.***

'Foreign' language instruction (even when the language is actually the learner's mother tongue) is ineffective without high investment costs and attitudinal change in society. Lo Bianco (1987 p 61) has recognized this and states that the intervention of public authorities, especially education, is unlikely to be sufficient to maintain languages when social factors are working strongly in other directions. For instance, the difficulties facing Italian in Queensland are presented in Gatt-Rutter (1990). Slowly but surely attitudes within society at large are changing but it is obvious that more than just attitudes must change. Minority languages are being eroded by the submersion of their speakers in a predominantly English environment (Gatt-Rutter 1988). The Special Broadcasting Service, ethnic radio and newspapers are not enough to compensate for the sheer bulk and pervasiveness of English language media.

The school environment can play a major role in language maintenance. Most children of immigrants reach kindergarten or school already fluent in their mother tongue. This fluency is wasted unless the children concerned are provided with the necessary linguistic support. There is opportunity, as yet unperceived, for schools (at least some schools) to train children as bilinguals. Where there is a concentration of speakers of one minority language, they can impart that language to non-speakers. In return, their acquisition of English will not be impaired but enhanced, as the evidence shows (Lambert 1987).

At present, much time, effort and money is being spent to provide language support in Australian schools. There are numerous different types of language programs and so-called 'bilingual' programs in use (see Di Biase and Dyson 1988) all with very modest results. On the other hand, the experience of Canada and elsewhere shows that even a small number of 'immersion' type schools, if well conceived and well organised, can produce a much larger number of balanced bilinguals than can be produced by conventional language teaching in schools. This would benefit Australian students whatever their language of origin.

Language maintenance and planned bilingualism and multilingualism would be much better served, then, by more well organized immersion programs. Exponents of this type of instruction have referred to it by different names: 'bilingual', 'mother tongue', 'heritage' and others (see Cummins 1980 and Swain 1980 on the Canadian experience; Beardsmore 1980 on the European schools and Fishman 1976 on the US). It is also true that different people have used this type of instruction for different purposes, some with language maintenance far from their objectives. The US experience has seen bilingual programmes used as a transitional arrangements to speed non-English speakers to total linguistic assimilation. Often, (even in Australia) they have been seen by some minority groups purely as token gestures towards language maintenance.

It would take a separate paper to expand on the advantages to be gained from immersion teaching and the issues involved. The main principle behind this type of instruction is to immerse the learners in the new language they wish to acquire (or the minority language they wish to maintain) by giving this language the same role (and therefore the same status) as English in the school. This is done by taking the language out of the language class and using it in the same way as English, that is, as the medium through which other subjects are taught.

Immersion teaching is not new to Australia. Clyne (1988b) has shown how bilingual or mother tongue medium education was widely practised in 19th-century Australia. There have also been more recent successful programs in Australia (see Clyne 1986 for German and Polites in Sexton 1987 for Greek, both in Melbourne; Rubichi 1983 for Italian in South Australia; the Lycee Condorcet in Sydney, and Berthold 1989 for French in Queensland). This last case is particularly interesting, because at Benowa High School the program was mounted even though there was no significant local community of French speakers, and yet has been highly successful. This is testimony to the fact that immersion teaching does work when implemented correctly.

## Language ghettoes or language gardens

In conclusion, we would like to answer some of the critics of minority language maintenance. There have been suggestions that successful language maintenance will lead to language 'ghettoes' (most notably by Blainey 1988), or that pursuing this concern will distract migrants from achieving equality of status and opportunity through acquiring English. We do not agree! Both these critiques are answered in Gatt-Rutter (1990b). The answer does not lie in the often unsatisfactory assimilation of immigrant groups but in educating those whose attitudes have created the situation of inequality, that is, the English-speaking majority. We support Smolicz's (1983) discussion of pluralism, in which it is argued that a society which supports an ideology of cultural and social diversity encourages the development of bicultural individuals who can participate in the activities of more than one ethnic group while still maintaining their ethnic identity. As Giles and Johnson (1987 p 95) report, this can only happen in situations where minority groups have attained a certain equality in status and power with the dominant group. They propose that harmonious intergroup relations may be maintained when group members focus on valued differences and relationships between the groups. Australia is in a good position, with its diversity of languages, to transform itself, into a microcosm of a possible new world order characterized by greater personal and social mobility not only across distances and geographical and political frontiers, but across languages and cultures as well. The opportunity exists for Australia to reach towards new dimensions both as a trading nation and as a socio-cultural entity, as a member of the world community and as a 'lucky country' and a 'clever country' in its own right.

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# THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL IDENTITY IN A MULTILINGUAL SETTING: THE SINGAPORE DILEMMA

### by Catherine Lim

## The dominance of English in Singapore

The adopted child, the changeling who eventually superceded all the natural children and assumed control of the household. The concubine quietly let in by the back door, who rapidly rose to become Empress Dowager, enjoying supreme power at court.

You will allow for the imaginative excesses of a writer of fiction but though these analogies for the dominance of English over the other languages in multilingual Singapore may be a little overblown, the truth they embody is certainly not.

The role of English in Singapore is unique in the world. One of the Third World Countries which were once under British rule, Singapore is the only country that has officially adopted English as the working language. While the status of English in the post-independence Third World declined or was reversed vis a vis the native languages, in Singapore it went on from strength to strength, until today, it is the language that enjoys highest status and support among the nation's 2.6 million people. There are four official languages in multi-racial Singapore—English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil—but in practice, English dominates, both in the institutional and private life of the nation. It is the language of government, of administration and employment. It is the medium of instruction in all the schools and tertiary institutions. It is the only one of the four official languages whose informal use extends across all ethnic groups and socio-economic levels. Hence by any indicator—official status, social prestige, extent of use, number of speakers—English is the dominant language in Singapore.

On the level of day-to-day life, it is the constant surprise of the visitor in Singapore to hear English spoken everywhere and by everybody—the news reporter, the shop assistant, the bellhop, the taximan, the cooked food hawker.

## Reasons for dominance

What factors have given rise to this unique role of English in Singapore? Why is it that while other former English-speaking colonies, such as Malaysia and the Philippines, have relegated English to secondary position, Singapore continues to nurture the growth of a language that historically and culturally must have been both alien and alienating to its mixed immigrant Asian population? Although in the final analysis, the answers will be seen to lie in a complex of historical and sociopolitical factors, it is very tempting to identify the one, single factor against which all these can be explained. This one factor is the unique usefulness of English to Singapore at every stage in the history of its development, right from the time of its founding by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819 to the present day. In the early years, the usefulness of English was merely administrative: the provision of an English education meant a local supply of clerks and junior officers for the British administration. In the later years with the increasing importance of English as the language of world trade and scientific development and with Singapore developing as an industrial and service centre, the economic value of English made it immeasurably more important than any of the local languages. This was well recognised by the people in Singapore as was seen in the increasing enrolment in English-medium schools and the corresponding decrease in the Chinese-Malay and Tamil-medium schools.

Indeed, the economic usefulness of English has been and continues to be its *raison d'etre* in pragmatic, achievement-oriented Singapore.

## Strategy for maintaining dominance: depoliticisation of English

So firm was the belief of the government in the need to promote English for the very survival of this small island state of no natural resources, that the history of English in Singapore has been one of total and uninterrupted support. This nurturing has continued even during those periods when political exigencies necessitated an opposite stance towards English. Thus, for instance, during the years when Singapore was part of Malaysia and the call to replace English with Malay as the sole official language reverberated at every public forum, the official support of English simply went underground, continued quietly there and came out in the open again as soon as Singapore separated from Malaysia and was once more free to work out its own future plans.

It will not be necessary to go into the many strategies by which English was promoted—varied and ingenious though they were—but it will be useful to examine the one strategy by which the government in one fell swoop, did away with all hostilities and antagonisms against English and thus cleared the way for a smooth, untrammelled path of growth and power of the language. It is useful because it was precisely the success of this strategy that has resulted in the present problems.

The problems ensuing from the dominance of English were certainly severe in the early years. The dominance had created very serious division among the people at almost every level of life. At the national level, an English-educated elite who held better jobs and had higher socio-economic standing were resented by the others who saw them as pseudo-western, and betrayers of their Asian linguistic and cultural heritage. 'English-educated' came to be used as a derogatory term, associated with a flamboyant, hedonistic life-style. At the level of the family, English-educated children could become seriously alienated from their uneducated or Chinese-educated parents. Even at the level of the individual, there could be trauma if a sense of guilt was felt for having abandoned one's mother tongue and cultural traditions.

***The economic usefulness of English has been and continues to be its* raison d'etre *in pragmatic, achievement-oriented Singapore.***

In the 1960s and 1970s the issue of English continued to be a potential time-bomb to blow up the fragile bonds so laboriously built up between the different ethnic groups. The government's main concern was to remove the hostility towards English, but not English itself, since its use was necessary for Singapore's very economic survival. It was a seemingly impossible task.

The government rose to the challenge by adopting what must be regarded as a political masterstroke. It depoliticised English by the simple expedient of assigning to it totally unemotive, utilitarian functions: English became the language for economic and technological development, and no more. The mother tongues, on the other hand, were assigned the nobler functions of social, moral and cultural development. Thus English became the language valued purely because it was useful for making a living in the world; there were no sentimental attachments to it, whereas the emotional and spiritual needs of the people found expression and fulfilment in the mother tongues. This policy was effectively translated into action in the schools through the policy of bilingualism by which every child must take as one of his subjects his mother tongue so that while he learnt science or geography or maths in English, he imbibed traditional moral and cultural values through his mother tongue, that is, Chinese, Malay or Tamil. With the stark Orwellian simplicity of 'English for earning a living—Yes', 'English for developing character—No', the policy of bilingualism completely neutralised and de-politicised English.

Henceforth, with English out of the way as a political issue, the government felt free to concentrate on the job of raising the standard of English through improving teaching in the schools, because the global nature of Singapore's business, technological and other interests required an internationally accepted standard of English. So great was the concern that English in Singapore should meet this standard that very elaborate and sustained programs for error eradication, improving writing styles, improving speech, etc. were mounted in the civil service and in the schools. Through the 1960s and 1970s therefore, English was officially the language of purely utilitarian value. To reinforce this impression, the Government made provisions for the study of those other foreign languages which also had utilitarian value, especially as a means of acquiring technological expertise: French, German and Japanese were offered as third languages for students who were interested and competent.

## English as an obstruction to the development of a national identity: the present problem

Under such favourable circumstances, it was not surprising that English, once an adopted language, became the most important language, outstripping the others and enjoying a sociostructural support so strong that it would be impossible to dismantle. The ultimate support for the continued dominance of English in a success-oriented society like Singapore must be in the continuance of the Cambridge-based examination system, by which the prospects for higher education or for a career are almost solely determined. The examination system is such a powerful force for control that no innovation in the schools is likely to succeed unless this force has been first taken into account and accommodated.

Given the far-spreading, deep-reaching influence of a language that is seen as tied up with economic survival itself, the belief that the influence of English could be restricted to purely business concerns and could be prevented from extending to the social, moral and not cultural aspects of an individual's development, was unrealistic, to say the least.

As long as the primary aim was economic advancement, there was no trouble. But in the 1980s, having more than achieved a reasonable standard of material prosperity, Singapore was ready to grapple with the problem of a national identity, the problem of bringing the ethnic diversity under the unity of a Singaporean people. While political independence had been achieved

24 years ago, it remained to translate the instrumental political conditions of nationhood into the socio-cultural reality of peoplehood; to translate the merely physical entity of a state into the spiritual principle of a nation. And here it ran smack into problems which it is beginning to consider more intractable than any economic problem it has ever faced—the problems created by that very language that it has promoted and nurtured for so long. For rightly or wrongly, it perceives English as largely responsible for having created tremendous obstacles to the development of a national identity. The use of English has brought into being a whole generation of Singaporeans who are more at home with western-oriented lifestyles and value-systems than with the traditions of their parents and grandparents.

***The use of English has brought into being a whole generation of Singaporeans who are more at home with western-oriented lifestyles and value-systems.***

Suddenly the alarm bells are ringing everywhere. The Confucian ideal of filial piety, the traditional respect for the old, the beauty of traditional dance, arts, crafts, literature—would all these buckle under the combined impact of 'Dallas' and blue jeans and hamburgers and pop music and western egocentrism?

This is the crux of the present national concern, expressed at discussions, public forums, feedback sessions, etc, as Singaporeans try to hammer out a national ideology based on common 'core' values, that is, values identified as worth preserving and promoting and presumably, capable of counter-acting the not-so-desirable western values. Once these core values have been agreed on, measures for teaching and promoting them will be formalised and implemented, beginning with the schools.

Meanwhile, Singapore's leaders continue to worry about an emerging society that is a 'neither here-nor-there' society, neither Western nor Asian, but an indeterminate congeries of not necessarily the best elements of each.

## A possible solution to the problem

At the centre of the dilemma is the question of how to handle the immense power of the language that had brought about all these undesired values: how to keep this power for the continuing technological advancement to which Singapore is committed, and at the same time, prise loose from it its social and cultural content and replace that with traditional content? In a way, the dilemma is no different from that encountered earlier, which had then been solved by the neat policy of bilingualism. Only this time, the exigencies of nation-building call for more than a surface political solution; they call for total cultural re-building, for a total cultural paradigm shift.

For this cultural re-building, there are two 'givens', two existing conditions that have to be incorporated. The first as we have seen, is the fact that English is the only common language and the western-oriented lifestyle the only common lifestyle among Singapore's diverse ethnic groups. The second is the fact that each of these ethnic groups is too distinct and exhibits too strong a cultural tradition to warrant any hope that the traditions would merge into a single cultural and national identity. This observation was made as long ago as 1972 by two sociologists, Chan and Evers (1972 p15).

True, there are now efforts to blend the cultures by having a national costume (in the same way that Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia have their distinctive national costumes) or a national dance, but this kind of blending at best touches the question of a common culture at its periphery only, rather than at its core.

Hence, the new paradigm will have to incorporate these two 'givens', the dominance of English at the national level and the separate distinctiveness of each ethnic culture at the community level. In view of these two constraints, it is not difficult to envisage what the paradigm of cultural re-building will be like. Indeed, there appears to be only one possible model. It is a kind of two-layered system —on the top, a common philosophy based on universal social and mutual values comprising the best of East and West—in the words of the Prime Minister, a blending of Confucianist ethics, Malay traditions and Hindu ethics with western scepticism and the open discussive methods of scientific inquiry—and below, the co-existence of the three separate Asian cultures, each with its own linguistic and art forms. A mixed framework of this kind has its inherent contradicitions and undergoes, before long, the strains and stresses of internal adjustments. It is likely, however, that this framework is the only one available. Historical and geopolitical forces have brought it about and will continue to shape it.

It is likely also that since the already strong sociostructural support that English enjoys will have to be kept intact, the not-so-strong supports of the ethnic languages will have to be considerably buttressed to achieve the balance that will keep the framework viable. Indeed, the work of buttressing has already started; for instance, the mother tongues which were previously only second languages, are now being offered in certain selected schools as first languages, Chinese literature is being encouraged as a school subject, six primary schools have been chosen as 'seed' schools to try out special moral education programs, and outside the schools, the various ethnic cultural organisations as well as the mass media have been mobilised to create greater awareness of traditional values, customs and practices.

## Implications for English language teaching and learning

How will all these exercises which are aimed at the development of a national identity affect English language teaching and learning? What implications for the future role of English in Singapore will the developments have?

Prognostications for the foreseeable future are not difficult, since, barring any change in the existing international status of English, the present entrenched position and role of English in business, education, administration, politics and private life will continue. What could happen is that an increased emphasis on the teaching of the mother tongues within an already crammed timetable in the schools could mean increased pressure on teachers and students. It could also result in less concentration on English, leading in turn to declining English standards that would be sure to spark off another round of corrective measures similar to the one in the 1970s. What is most likely to happen is that while the different cultures are preserved via the respective mother tongues, the universal core values that all the ethnic groups share will have to be imparted through English, the common school language.

This will have implications for curriculum development, in particular on materials development. Materials are produced centrally in the Curriculum Development Institute, a division of the Ministry of Education and the content of the materials often reflects national policy and ideology. The core values identified for the building of a national identity will be incorporated in, say, stories, reading passages, activity and guide books, etc. It is possible that the original ethnic terms for core values will be preserved but explained in English; on a long term basis, this may necessitate corpus planning as an essential part of language planning. Some linguists are already speculating that as a matter of cultural pride, certain idioms in English could actually be localised or indigenised, for instance 'bread-and-butter' might be changed to 'rice-and-curry', and 'any Tom, Dick and Harry' could be 'any Ah Kow, Muthu and Ahmad'.

This leads me to a point which, as a writer in English, I am particularly interested in, but which at best I can only be speculative about—the role of Singapore English in the development of national identity. Singapore English (sometimes lightheartedly or disparagingly referred to as Singlish) is a localised form of English that is now a distinct variety of English, in the way that Indian English and Caribbean English have become distinct varieties. It is the inevitable result of the widespread use of English in Singapore; in its most localised form, it may be unintelligible to visitors from other English-speaking countries, and in its most educated form, it is heardly distinguishable from native-speaker English, except in its phonology. The linguists in Singapore feel that Singapore English is a reflection of a growing sense of national identity among the various ethnic groups and will ultimately be the common language and the basis of a common culture. In this connection, it is believed that the potential of Singapore English for the development of a truly Singaporean literature and theatre, is vast and exciting. Already, writers like myself are exploring the use of Singapore English for its literary value, and playwrights and dramatists are seeing its enormous potential for theatre. A Singapore culture based on the use of Singapore English is therefore a possibility, but it could only be part of a larger socio-cultural reality, mainly because English is valued chiefly for its utilitarian value and for contacts with the outside world and hence standard English or the English of international use, will continue to be the most valued variety.

In the final analysis, it will be remembered that a national identity means a shared psychic framework by which differences arising from ethnicity, language, religion and socio-economic standing among the people are submerged under a common core of deep and abiding values that make them think, feel and behave as one distinct group of people. It can be seen that the development of a national identity is an organic, evolutionary process, and evolution takes a long time.

No matter how long it takes, Singapore's leaders are committed to its realisation, as they view this as the very condition for Singapore's survival in a complex, volatile region and world. And English, which has played a significant role in the development of Singapore right from the beginning of its history, is likely to go on exerting this influence, in one form or another, to one degree or another.

The changeling child grown up to take charge of the household, the concubine turned Empress Dowager to preside over the court; she will continue to be listened to, looked up to with awe, admiration or even some resentment, but she can never be ignored.

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# EARLY GERMAN AT RIDLEY

### by Roger Wiseman

***This article summarises a study (1) of German-as-a-second-language program in a South Australian junior primary school. However, the concerns for which the particular study was undertaken are general concerns in the policies and practices of many second language programs for young children in Australia. Very little comparable published material was found relevant to the contemporary Australian situation (although see Clyne 1986, SA Ed Dept, 1986) so what was considered and some of what was found is a useful, novel contribution to practical considerations in present and future Australian second language provisions.***

## The School

Ridley Grove Junior Primary School serves an area in the northwestern suburbs of Adelaide, mainly public housing with about half the families depending on some sort of government welfare. The area is ethnically mixed but dominated by the traditional British-Australian majority with a diversity of other small ethnic minorities. However, partly due to people moving out from the migrant hostel in an adjacent suburb and partly due to government housing policy, over the last few years there has been an increase in South East Asian settlement, mostly Vietnamese or Kampuchean refugees.

At the time of the study, about 10% of the junior primary children were from these families, comprising most of the recognised ESL children in the school.

In mid 1984, for a mixture of educational reasons (2), the Principal and an experienced German-speaking teacher decided to introduce German as a second language through the school. This was discussed with the other teachers, the School Council, Departmental representatives, and eventually, with enthusiastic School Council backing, the Education Department supported the innovation.

A German classroom was set up. Various school funds, resources grants, multicultural funds, contributions from the teacher and from contacts in Germany funded the German program.

At the beginning of 1985 all the children in grades 1 and 2 and all the Reception children then starting school commenced German lessons. The other Reception children (about half) and others coming into the school during the year commenced as they came in. In 1985 the R-2 coverage was extended to grade 3 as the 1985 grade 2 children moved into the primary school.

I became involved at this stage as the Principal was looking for assistance in describing, analysing and reporting on the developing program, including trying to get some indications of answers to questions (3) of policy and practice.

## The study

This report covers the period from early in 1986 to early in 1987. At the beginning of this period the German program was one year old. When the study started the children were in grades Reception (just started school at age 5) to beginning grade 3 and when this stage of it ended the oldest had moved into grade 4.

Over time, the program changed and one of the intentions of the study was to report on those changes. The study included close observation of several lessons of each class in the German and its home room (4) (both generally and also focusing on a teacher-designated 'quicker', 'average' and 'slower' student and an ESL child in each class), structured discussions with children, questionnaires for teachers at this and at another nearby school without a second language program (5), some informal and some more formal 'testing' of children's competencies in German. It was intended as a case study of an early stage in a German language program in a junior primary school in Australia.

## The program

The German program involved two 45 minute lessons a week for each class, mainly in the mornings with at least one of the two early in the day. All lessons were in the German classroom. At this stage the program was based closely on the South Australian Education Department's (1979) Primary German Curriculum (including suggested methodology and materials arranged in a tight sequence of units). It gradually evolved away from this through minor variations while remaining similar.

## German and English

It was noticeable that, at this stage of language, many elements of the German involved were similar to the corresponding English – lexically and syntactically (6).

Receptive decoding of German into English, therefore, could be frequently eased by 'Anglicising' the German into the approximate English while productive coding from English into German could be by trying an approximate 'Germanised' form of the English. However, the second process is likely to require far more knowledge about when it is or is not appropriate and, if it is, what 'Germanising' entails in that case as there are apparently no generalisable rules which apply.

## Competencies

There were very clear differences between competencies in reception and production of German.

Reception involved working out adequate interpretations of German – often in a situation of non-verbal clues from context and gesture, and restricted choice between provided possibilities. Production could involve the construction of new utterances by using an adequate mixture of previously possessed lexical, syntactic and semantic understanding – or could require only the repetition of memorised formulae on request or in response to a scripted exchange.

Of course, limits to the German which children received were set directly or indirectly by the teacher (in her continuous decisions constraining but gradually expanding what was considered appropriate to their existing competencies). Limits to the German which children produced were set directly by themselves (dependent on their perceptions of their own competencies.)

In at least the formulaic language relationships, receptive competencies were normally (and predictably) much greater and more secure than productive ones – as in much language learning, 'they can understand far more than they can say'.

After two years of enjoyable German lessons for 45 minutes twice a week even the (teacher-designated) 'best' students could independently produce very little German themselves – and that mostly in received formulaic form. Given the contact time available this should be expected.

## Content

As already mentioned, the content (derived from the set curriculum) was largely formulaic expression and exchanges and some noun (with some verb and adjectival) lists. As well as direct use of these some new structures and functions were constructed from them by the teacher and children.

If the early content included more verbs with some simple first, second and third person forms then more could be said, asked, and reported by children. Perhaps some simplification of the German (eg. more use of 'general purpose' verbs such as 'to be' and 'to have') would widen the range of simplified German expressions, functions and notions that children could interpret and produce.

More discussion and unwrapping of patterns in the German they are learning, as part of a more integrated language arts program, could provide for more flexibility in recombining vocabulary and grammatical elements of known and new expressions. However, this is a matter for further investigation.

## Pronunciation

Usually the teaching approach taken was acceptance of initial attempts, then modelling of a correct version. Some difficult or novel sounds were demonstrated with a literally hands on, 'feel where the sound is coming from' approach.

Common 'Anglicised' pronunciation errors were being steadily tightened up ('Germanised') and encouragement and praise were given to correct sounding but there was no central or demanded emphasis on immediately correct production.

This seemed logically appropriate as it is linguistically more important to emphasise pronunciation in cases where it is significant in providing for syntactic/semantic recognisability and distinctions.

## Teaching methodology

Discussions about the most appropriate age at which to start the teaching of a second language are futile unless they include some specification of the usual methodology, the logic of procedure, to be used. Particular methodologies seem likely to be more or less appropriate to students at particular ages, previous experiences and existing competencies in particular learning strategies – in learning second languages as in most areas of cultural learning. (12)

The methodology followed (as carried out in the Primary German Curriculum) involved much introduction, drill and practice of, usually but not always, accumulating vocabulary and sentence structures. Often the sentences were parts of question-answer 'scripted' discourse pairs. The drill and practice was largely through activities which provided for many repetitions of the target structures in sensible, realistic or pseudo-realistic and enjoyable ways.

At this stage in the curriculum little attention was given to analysing each word of the target sentences – children memorised the set patterns and the word lists set up in recipe or formula learning exercises.

Apart from teaching/learning of some common elements (use of question mark, physical construction of sentences from word cards, . . . ) and mention of a few vocabulary items or responses from other German lessons, the learning of English and the learning of German in the school appeared to go on separately and independently (7).

There did not appear to be an overt integration in the curriculum of the language learning in German and in English which could be possible in a combined 'learning about language'.

This could be used as a vehicle to develop closer attention to and skills in subtleties of language use. It could provide for both a wider repertoire, as a doubled source of culture, and a doubling of available ways of making and giving meaning within this. There are thus simply more possibilities of becoming aware of and competent in using distinctions in language – the basis of language arts.

This possibility could be one justification for teaching a second language at an early schooling age when children are starting to be taught about their first language and about language in general. It is also at this level that the relative differences in competencies between English as a first language and German as a second language are least. These differences are important as they can be used by learners as a basis for considering the apparent practical value of second language learning (the longer and clearer the gap, the more disinclined the student may be to use the second language, if given a choice.)

## Homework

Another suggestion is to add homework assignments to give more time and opportunity for learning and practice, to involve (potentially) more people in working on German with children, and to extend the practice and consideration of 'German' outside the German classroom. Probably little can be expected from teaching a second language in school if the only time children spend on it is the couple of lessons a week they spend with that particular teacher.

If the program becomes more a part of the general language arts program of the school the more variety there can be in homework activities and the greater relevance these can have to the children's wider schooling.

## Individual differences

The importance of individual student differences was remarkable. The mode of learning (and non-learning) of German, as with their other class activities, indicated quite different modes of attention, engagement and understanding in the requirements of German usage tasks.

The quicker learners appeared to be more clearly and more consistently giving attention to many of the tasks required of other children, carrying these out privately, monitoring the others' performances and evolving understanding by actively searching for and attempting to use patterns in German.

To some extent this active learning of the 'why' and 'how' of German rather than the 'what' involved a reconstruction by the children of the set curriculum. The course as set tended to emphasise the 'what', the learning of words and formulae. At this stage most tasks could be satisfactorily carried out on the basis of memorisation or imitation (8) with little understanding.

The presenting of a sequence of partly accumulating fixed phrase structures with variation by substitution from a noun-list readily lent itself to such a learning (and immediate performance) mode. It would be interesting to observe whether more explicit 'language arts', including articulating the grammatical or formal principles or 'patterns' involved, might provide for the 'middling' and 'slower' students more of what the 'quicker' ones were trying to work out for themselves. This could make these latter attempts more effective or even redundant, leaving them to work on further aspects of the language learning and use (9). However, this is only hypothetical at this stage.

The teaching mode (10) appeared to reduce the differences in children's performance (and probably competencies) at this stage.

The teacher suggested that this was partly a consequence of the even sharing of her attention and other teaching resources available. She expected that differences would be greater later. It will be interesting to look for this as these children continue in the program. The ethical issues involved in this relate to wider issues of schooling and society and cannot be answered by mere consideration of second language teaching and learning.

## English as a Second-Language (ESL) children

Given the relatively simple and slow nature of the German language involved, and the general representation of German as an object to be learnt and used like curricular 'facts' (including 'rules') in other areas, it was probably not surprising that ESL children appeared to be little disadvantaged.

It seemed to be less their English competencies and more their individual learning and social styles that influenced their German learning. What they have learnt and are learning in English is of a different order than what is presently required in their learning of German.

Most of the language used in the German class was English (11). Much of the new content the children had to recognise, understand and learn was simpler than in other areas of the curriculum (and the changes suggested in the methodology would emphasise even more the value of learning a second (or subsequent) language in general language learning and use).

Therefore, apart from the very beginning English language learners, there does not seem to be more convincing reasons for keeping ESL children out of German lessons for extra English than for keeping them out of any other lessons. In fact, given the relative simplicity of the German lessons and the close attention to language, mostly through English, it could be argued that, if ESL children should have extra English instead of mainstream lessons, there are several areas of the curriculum that could be less injuriously missed than German!

## Children with learning and speech problems

Observation and analysis of the German program in terms of specific tasks required and individuals' performances suggest that it could be beneficial to children with some learning and speech problems.

Adding German versions of sounds, spelling and structures to English ones can make discrimination, recognition, understanding and production of knowledge and speech more complicated.

However, there are other features distinguishing the classroom processes of the program which make it likely to provide advantages over purely English classwork. These features are:

the fact of children having to give close attention to phonetic details of what is said;

the acceptability of slower oral delivery than in English;

the normally close teacher control and support;

the fact of all children having difficulty and requiring this close attention, correction and support;

the limiting of the range of publicly recognised and required competence and performance;

the low level of task complexity relative to solely English language tasks.

Given the usual combinations of these features, the children with some learning and speech handicaps could (and did) readily receive appropriately focused tasks, guidance and support from the teacher without this obviously distinguishing them from other children. They were required to perform on tasks which were more within their competencies than many of those which they were faced with in solely English curricula.

## Cultural aspects

Culture, as a way of giving meaning to the world, obviously includes and can be carried by, language – so the teaching and learning of German language is part of the teaching and learning of German culture.

The language involved was mostly carrying everyday, Australian culture – indicating that the life the children knew could be lived through using German as well as through English (if 'as much' German was learnt as English!).

The children in the German classroom were surrounded by pictures, children's books, tourist posters and other images of an attractive, interesting, prosperous society. The activities may have seemed more varied and the general standard of living higher than in, at least, the immediate neighbourhood of the children's school.

However, the scenery may be different, the age of some buildings and the past life they speak of may be older, local animals may be different, houses double storey, climates differ, some foods different – but a general impression the children could construct was that life for ordinary German people is recognisable as a variation on the sorts of lives people live in Australia. Features differ but the frames are similar and familiar.

## Understanding of others

The impressions of German people provided by the program could be gained from: the implied personalities, concerns and thinking of people who would use the functions and notions of the language the children were being encouraged to learn; the concerns and thinking of the characters in stories they heard or read or in the pictures they saw; and what the children could interpret from the person of their German teacher.

From all these it would appear likely that impressions were picked up of 'Germans' as being ordinary, pleasant, active, cheerful, friendly, relatively affluent, 'modern' people – much like 'ordinary Australians' but living in a different country. The little that was elicited in the discussions with children supported this interpretation.

'German' activities, cultural references and persons were related to Germany. If and when these images of 'Germans' in Germany are transferred to 'German-Australians' in Australia, the inter-national understandings would be extended to inter-ethnic ones over a period of time. What actually happens and what influences any such transferrals and extensions would set a useful part of a later study.

## Relations with other parts of the curriculum

Displays of work from German lessons were put up in the administration area and elsewhere in the school and occasionally there were short, rehearsed, presentations at the Friday school assembly. It appeared that there were no other significant working relationships of the German program with the general curriculum enacted in other classrooms. Children, particularly younger ones, greeting or being greeted by the German teacher in German in the playground or occasional use of such greetings by one or two other teachers with their classes were the only cases observed or reported of German extending beyond the German classroom.

Homework would provide some extension in time, space and in physical and social setting – but junior primary school policy at this school and in general was against it.

## Testing

As is discussed in the report, valid testing of young children's actual understandings and competencies in German is difficult and likely to compete with preferred teaching/learning methodology, running counter to the pattern of teaching and learning activities (12) preferred and expected by the children and the teacher.

Nevertheless, it seems important to develop more formal ways (13) of describing (probably a concept with less negative connotations than 'testing'), at intervals, what children actually can do. This could give a more realistic and educationally valid picture than the common reports describing what the teacher did or what the intentions were that the children should have learnt as embodied in particular activities they had been involved in.

Such descriptions would be difficult for a teacher to carry out alone particularly if no examples or usable forms of what to look for, how to look for it, and how to describe it are provided in the curriculum. It is suggested that urgent attention be given to the development of advice, examples and materials for the easy, guiding, systematic, non-obtrusive and valid describing of children's German competencies.

## Records

Recording the development of children's competencies (rather than the more common recording of children's and teacher's activities) will logically have to follow the evolution and institution of descriptive measures. It is the dynamic and pragmatic use of the results of these measures. As such, it should be investigated at the same time, as part of the same process.

## Conclusion

This stage of the continuing study has shown some of the complexities and issues of the German language program from the beginning of its second to the beginning of its third year of extension, through the junior primary and into the primary grades of schooling. Some information has been presented, some suggestions made, and some intended further study foreshadowed.

It is clear that answers to some crucial questions are still not clear and cannot yet be provided. Further investigation of these will be included in later stages of the study.

(An unfortunate note is that there has been a major alteration in the intended development of the program due to a change in Departmental policy such that new programs will not now be supported through all the junior primary and primary grades. Therefore this program can be extended through the grades only by dropping it from earlier grades. This, of course, will change the content, activities, and expectations of the program).

This study is only of a German as a second language program. Other fine-grained studies of other languages are needed to show how far any results are generalisable across all second language teaching and learning.

Careful study of the day by day activities of children and teachers in second language classrooms, the ways in which these activities are related to the other strands of their schooling, the actual real-life competencies which children develop, and, very importantly, the variety in what they do – is needed, in other situations, with other languages, with other methodologies, before second langauge teaching in Australia can be understood or planned on non-naive or non-ideological bases. Many pronouncements and opinions are still based on rhetoric or hopes. Only through systematic and, often, dogged, study can these be replaced, or at least reinforced, by reality.

### Notes

**1** The full report, with the same title, is available from the author.

**2** An account of the initiation, setting up and first year of the program, 'The German Programme at Ridley Grove Schools', by Barbara Moellner and John Almond, the teacher of German and the Principal, can be obtained from the school. I am most grateful for all the discussions, help and advice I had from them, but the descriptions and interpretations in this report are my responsibility.

**3** These included what should be done with whom and at what grade, what was happening, how it could be improved, how the children and teachers interpreted what was being done and what influence it was having on the schooling of ESL children and children with various learning problems.

**4** In fact it appeared that children's learning (or non-learning) strategies were remarkably similar in the German and home class rooms.

**5** Questionnaire answers indicated that the main apparent difference between opinions from teachers in this school and those in the nearby one, as yet without a second language program, was a continuing slight tendency for the former to put more emphasis on the teacher involved, apparently partly personalising their consideration of the program. It could also be noted that experience and observation not apparently linked to a diminution in acceptance and enthusiasm – there was more support of the observed practice than when it was still expected principle.

**6** Examples included: Was/What; Hier/Here; Du/You; Brot/Bread; Katze/Cat; Das/That; Windig/Windy; Ein/One; Schwester/Sister; Ja/Yeah; Schuh/Shoe; Hier ist mein . . . /Here is my; Das ist die . . . /That is the . . . .

**7** That is, at that stage of the program's development. More integration has since been developed.

**8** The teacher considered that the active construction or reconstruction can normally start only after the children have a basic foundation – which was still being formed at this stage with these young children.

**9** It was considered by the teacher that different children search for these 'patterns' when they ask for them and are ready to comprehend them. This will be investigated further later.

**10** Involving mainly whole class working or observing, closely specified tasks and language, close control of who responds or performs publicly then warm and strong encouragement to a guaranteed successful performance.

**11** Only a small part of the talk was in German. Most discussions and instruction were in English, with all the English learning this involves. (Incidental teaching involved much about the social relations of classrooms in particular and the wider world in general.)

**12** Consistent control (through positive encouragement, reinforcement, praise, advice and modelling) was kept over children actually responding when asked to do so. No cases of negative sanctions were observed (unless continuing pressure and urging to prevent avoidance and a maintenance of silence is defined as 'negative'). Children were encouraged, helped out and coached but they had to answer or perform when requested. The coaching could be word by word but once a child had been chosen he or she would be helped through. Once helped to make an acceptable response, the child was then publicly praised, sometimes with the others called on to applaud when a particular effort appeared to have been made.

Also praised were the occasional cases of originality (such as by, usually, 'quicker' children producing an as yet untaught new combination of words or structures or pointing out a possible pattern.

**13** In this study use was made of: informal testing with children wearing lapel radio mikes and then transcribing the 'German' used in particular set tasks (reading aloud, taking a part in a previously rehearsed scripted dialogue, talking about a picture with the teacher); written tests requiring drawing lines between words and pictures or circling of chosen sentences (given the limited English reading skills of younger children only the older, grade 3/4 or 4, children were expected to read sentences for themselves while the younger ones had them read as they followed on their sheets; children being given 3 picture cards (previously used in class work) and having to point to which of them was being referred to in an oral statement or question from the teacher. The results of these ways of eliciting the production of German language from these young children are described in the full report.

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# TEACHING COGNITIVE SKILLS IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM: READING AND THOUGHT

**by Bette Hirsch**

The American high school classroom has been a focus of intense concern during the 1980s. Test results of 17 year olds suggest that the majority cannot apply what they have learned to complex intellectual tasks, and they come to us in higher education with the same cluster of deficiencies. One recent study, 'Crossroads in American Education', led to the suggestion that emphasis must be placed on methods that promote effective thinking (Deloughry 1989).

At the national level there is profound interest also in preparing today's students for tomorrow's global culture and global economy. A recent report, *America in Transition: The International Frontier*, discussed the consequences of globalization for the US workforce:

*'Fiber-optic networks span the continents. Billions of dollars move in seconds from Milan to Tokyo to New York. Goods move around the world in a single day. An individual product may contain parts manufactured in five different countries and be assembled in a sixth.'*

Educators analyze the need for the nation's education system to respond to these currents. Claire Gaudiani, president of Connecticut College, suggests that schools must start 'meeting the needs of people who will operate in an increasingly internationalized environment even if they never leave Duluth' (Fiske 1989). In this groping towards a global perspective in education, foreign language classes are perceived as having a major role to play.

Partially in answer to these national concerns, the College Board's Educational Equality Project published in 1983 a book, *Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need To Know And Be Able To Do*, and in 1986, a second series of books, one in each of the disciplines, the foreign language book entitled *Academic Preparation in Foreign Language: Teaching for Transition from High School to College*. It focuses on the foreign language curriculum and basic competencies students need for desired academic outcomes.

In 1989, the College Board began publishing a third series of short books discussing specifically thinking skills and reading in each of the disciplines. The first one for English, *Reading Reconsidered*, has appeared. I wrote the foreign language book *Languages of Thought: Thinking, Reading and Foreign Languages* (Hirsch 1989).

The foreign language classroom is perhaps of necessity a place where thinking about what reading is must be part of a successful reading process from the earliest days of level one.

*'How can one read mindfully? Perhaps the most hazardous aspect of this problem is that students often do not recognize it. Reading as many students practice the activity simply means reading to learn what the source says in a relatively rote fashion, without transforming it, relating it to other matters, or viewing it critically.' (Perkins, 1987 p.77)*

Adolescents are wise enough and old enough to have developed some strategies for successful reading in their native language. Yet even if this is indeed the case for many of them, in the foreign language class they must begin anew in an unfamiliar language. Because of this, the successful reader is operating in very complex ways, right from the beginning, and the instructor needs to draw on this interaction between the first language and the foreign language.

How might we classify or define the higher order skills we wish to develop in secondary and post-secondary foreign language students? Lauren Resnick (1987, p.3), suggests an interesting approach to the definition of thinking skills. She lists some key features of higher order thinking:

*'Higher order thinking is nonalgorithmic. That is, the path of action is not fully specified in advance.*

*Higher order thinking tends to be complex. The total path is not 'visible' (mentally speaking) from any single vantage point.*

*Higher order thinking often yields multiple solutions, each with costs and benefits, rather than unique solutions.*

*Higher order thinking involves nuanced judgment and interpretation.*

*Higher order thinking involves the application of multiple criteria, which sometimes conflict with one another.*

*Higher order thinking often involves uncertainty. Not everything that bears on the task at hand is known.*

*Higher order thinking involves self-regulation of the thinking process. We do not recognize higher order thinking in an individual when someone else 'calls the plays' at every step.*

*Higher order thinking involves imposing meaning, finding structure in apparent disorder.*

*Higher order thinking is effortful. There is considerable mental work involved in the kinds of elaborations and judgements required.*

Often we judge that these higher order thinking skills need to await the advanced level of class of the third year in college or the fourth year in high school, but that is not necessarily so. Resnick (1987, p.9) suggests the following:

*'The most important single message of modern research on the nature of thinking is that the kinds of activities traditionally associated with thinking are not limited to advanced levels of development. Instead, these activities are an intimate part of even elementary levels of reading . . . when learning is proceeding well. In fact, the term 'higher order' skills is probably itself fundamentally misleading, for it suggests that another set of skills, presumably called 'lower order', needs to come first. This assumption that there is a sequence from lower level activities that do not require much independent thinking or judgment to higher level ones that do colors much educational theory and practice. Implicitly at least, it justifies long years of drill on the 'basics' before thinking and problem solving are demanded. Cognitive research on the nature of basic skills such as reading . . . provides a fundamental challenge to this assumption. Indeed, research suggests that failure to cultivate . . . higher order skills may be the source of major learning difficulties.'*

*'The process of understanding a written text, as it emerges in current psychological and artificial intelligence accounts, is one in which a reader uses a combination of what is written, what he or she already knows, and various general processes (e.g. making inferences, noting connections, checking and organizing) to construct a plausible representation of what the author presumably had in mind.'*

What kinds of skills do we want to encourage? The confrontation with text implies the manner in which students approach it, think about and discuss it during the reading, and what they carry from it after the reading. Do they approach what they are about to read drawing on past experiences (in the world and in reading) and ready to predict from the title of a piece of fiction or the look of an ad or timetable, what it will most likely be about? Are they ready to take risks and make intelligent guesses about words or ideas within that are unfamiliar? Do they look for patterns (both linguistic and thought) in the reading? As self-conscious readers do they take notes and learn to value their reactions and opinions? Do they organize and make connections within and between works? Do they compare and contrast elements of a work, fictional characters, thoughts? Can they separate fact from opinion? Can they infer from the work, using it as a jumping off point to understand another world – that of the author, that of the author's culture? What do they observe and what do they recall? What is being proposed is that critical thinking be viewed as one organizing principle of the foreign language classroom, that this classroom be one in which students are empowered to think and to read effectively.

It may also be the case that the foreign language classroom holds special opportunities for training students to read and think well. Each discipline embodies a unique way of thinking and problem-solving. The fact that virtually all students come to the foreign language text as outsiders, as ones who must break both the unknown linguistic and cultural codes, opens the possibility of examining, cooperatively developing, and strengthening mental habits that can lead to success. The fact that all face the same language barrier may be a crucial factor in the lessening of embarrassment before the unknown that can open doors to this level of learning. A most intriguing possibility exists that this type of training in higher order thinking skills can be set in motion from the early weeks of Level 1 of language classes, and then continue. We need somehow to develop this potential of the foreign language classroom as a site for thought.

***The foreign language classroom holds special opportunities for training students to read and think well.***

'How can we possibly squeeze something else into the already burdened curriculum?' might be a logical first reaction to this suggestion, or 'I spend so much time trying to help students learn the language I teach and achieve proficiency in it that to add to my goals seems unrealistic.' That would be a major problem if what were being proposed represented a separate body of knowledge to be learned in addition to existing subject matter. This also has been the anxious cry of the more traditional teacher attempting to incorporate concepts of teaching for proficiency into the class plan. But what is true in both cases is that a rethinking of curricular goals that encompasses the principles in question (proficiency or thinking skills) means most of all a shift in the ways material is presented and the intended goals of activities rather than an additional layer of materials in the curriculum. The focus shifts to the processes of the classroom, and to the organization of class time toward these ends.

As we attempt to train good thinkers and readers in our classes, we shall need to devise ways to model what the effective and thoughtful reader does when faced with reading. These processes often remain invisible to the less intuitive, less experienced, or less skilled student. The modelling, and the practice carrying out parts of the model, will lead, we may hope, to an internalisation of process and a recognition of what behaviours are appropriate at various moments of the reading activity. If a student, throughout the year, engages in certain activities before, during and after a first reading of a foreign language text, it seems likely that when assigned reading in a future class, with or without the suggested activities, he or she will approach the assignment knowing a number of ways to accomplish it effectively.

Some of the newer texts in foreign language have begun addressing these obstacles and directing students to more effective reading. But the majority assume this will happen naturally. I will sketch out three examples of this skill building in the foreign language class:

> the approach to reading: curiosity, awareness, hypothesis formation as tools of access.
>
> problem solving in reading: the interplay of L1 and L2
>
> reading in a culturally-tuned way

Special opportunities to establish a classroom in which students will succeed and strengthen thinking abilities through thoughtful reading exist and can be set in motion before the reading activity actually begins. The challenge is to establish a sizeable repertoire of thinking frames for students – strategies and processes they can employ to organise their thinking and to prepare them for successful, thoughtful reading.

One major aim of all pre-reading work in the class is to assist the student in bringing information to the text. Reading theorists have shown how dependent on world experience and previous knowledge readers are in understanding what they read. Students may think that the meaning they derive from text comes from what their eyes see on the page but often much of this meaning comes from prior experience (from what is in their heads). A brainstorming process can bring past experience to active consciousness and make it more readily usable during the actual reading. This can also mean reminding of past language learning. It can then serve as a basis for prediction and anticipation of content, two thinking processes which facilitate thinking.

## An example of text approach

If we could sit in on the class of Debbie Thomas, a Spanish teacher in Maryland, we would observe brainstorming in her second year high school class prior to reading the poem that inspired the song *Guantanamera*. Thomas has students think about what it would be like if something changed in their government: if perhaps it was taken over by another power and they had to leave. How would they adjust to another culture? What kind of changes would their family have to make? How would they feel about these changes? What would they miss? Do they know anyone who has fled another country to come to the US?

Thomas gives information about Jose Marti, a nineteenth century poet who wrote about gaining freedom from Spain. (Students have already studied Spanish colonization of the New World). She explains also that his poem was made into a popular Hispanic song that has become a symbol of freedom, especially for the Cubans since it is about Cuba. Students listen to the song sung by Joan Baez and follow the words in Spanish from a ditto Thomas has prepared. The predictions students have made about political change, and their general brainstorming, have prepared them to read this poem more successfully than without this process.

## Problem-solving in reading: the interplay of L1 and L2

Even though beginning language students must look closely at groups of words, this need not be a useless, boring exercise. The student who has been prepared to approach the text with curiosity and confidence in his or her capacity for intelligent guessing, as we have just witnessed with the Marti poem, is already on the way to developing useful approach skills. This student will also need practice with processes of dealing with a foreign language text during a first and subsequent reading that enhance the likelihood of his or her attainment of a deep level of understanding of the reading.

What are the sorts of strategies that the efficient reader brings to a reading in a first language? Some of these strategies involve treating the passage in a global manner, using skimming and scanning techniques. Others involve looking at potentially troubling words and drawing on L1 knowledge and previously learned L2 words (cognates, families of words, glosses). All involve intelligent guessing and the willingness to take risks with unknown material. Let's look at one, contextual inferencing.

## Contextual inferencing

The word that is unknown and mysterious in isolation often becomes a word the meaning of which can be guessed when read in context. Intelligent guessing is one approach to reading, and an element of good thinking that is to be encouraged. Students can be trained to look for clues to meaning in the words that surround the unknown word, and in the general context of sentence or paragraph.

The following paragraph contains four nonsense words: *doogledorph*, *gleep*, *klem*, and *sleechy*. Out of context it would be impossible to assign meaning to these words, even if one could pronounce them. As one reads the passage, equivalent English meanings become clear.

*He kept on climbing until he reached the top of the doogledorph. He was suddenly engulfed by a dense sleechy. As the wind carried it away, he found himself gazing out over a breathtaking panorama. White peaks surrounded him, some with fluffy sleechies seeming to be skewered on their points. The klem was a deep blue, and everything seemed to sparkle as the bright sun beamed down. As he looked down into the valley, he saw a two-bumped* *gleep ambling along the river bank. It was the most unusual one he had ever seen, but he was sure it was a gleep. He wondered what a gleep was doing in a doogledorph area. They usually inhabited only desert areas.' (Melendez 1985, p.99)*

Most readers recognise that the words mean 'mountain', 'camel', 'sky' and 'cloud'. How much easier such words became when read in context! Of course, not only context, but knowledge of the world is brought into play in the guessing process here. We might imagine that this context would be of little help to students who had never seen a picture of or read a description of a camel. Their world experience would not provide the information necessary to guess what the humped animal was. As instructors we often must consider whether or not the past experience of our students will allow them to find meaning in the contexts we show them. This is also true for cognates: if the word is not familiar in the native language, pointing out that it is a cognate of a word in the studied language will not be fruitful! In reading, what goes on between the eyes and the head is often more important than that which goes on between the eyes and the page (Phillips 1984).

## Reading in a culturally-tuned way

We have discussed how the language learner brings a knowledge of a first language and of the nature of reading in that language to foreign language reading, and ways of enhancing these already existing abilities. This interplay of L1 and L2 needs also to be directed toward the learner's awareness of decoding a cultural text each time he or she reads authentic materials in the foreign language. It is not merely the words and the syntax for their English equivalents that need be examined, but a 'cultural script' that must be unravelled as well.

The experience of the emigre whose shift of country has brought with it uprootedness and loss and the shock of living a bicultural, bilingual existence, points to the underlying cultural text of language. Listen to the experience of Eva Hoffmann, a Polish woman who came to the US as an adolescent:

*'We've been brought to classes that are provided by the government to teach English to newcomers. This morning, in the rinky-dink wooden barracks where the classes are held, we've acquired new names. Mine-'Ewa'-is easy to change into its near equivalent in English, 'Eva'. My sister's name-'Alina'-poses more of a problem, but after a moment's thought, the teacher decides that 'Elaine' is close enough. My sister and I hang our heads wordlessly under this careless baptism. The teacher then introduces us to the class, mispronouncing our last name. We make our way to a bench at the back of the room; nothing much has happened, except a small, seismic mental shift. The twist in our names takes them a tiny distance from us – but it's a gap into which the infinite hobgoblin of abstraction enters. Our Polish names didn't refer to us; they were as surely us as our eyes or hands. These new appellations, which we ourselves can't yet pronounce, are not us. They are identification tags, disembodied signs pointing to objects that happen to be my sister and myself. We walk to our seats, into a roomful of unknown faces, with names that make us strangers to ourselves.' (1989, p.10)*

***We need somehow to develop this potential of the foreign language classroom as a site for thought.***

Acquiring the words of a new language, one at a time, does not lead automatically to the acquisition of the 'inner life' of that language. And some words convey a totally different world (describing Penny, a girl with whom she spends much time):

*'We like each other quite well, though I'm not sure that what is between us is 'friendship' – a word which in Polish has connotations of strong loyalty and attachment bordering on love. At first, I try to preserve the distinction between 'friends' and 'acquaintances' scrupulously, because it feels like a small lie to say 'friend' when you don't really mean it, but after a while, I give it up. 'Friend', in English, is such a good-natured, easygoing sort of term, covering all kinds of territory, and 'acquaintance' is something an uptight snobbish kind of person might say. My parents, however, never divest themselves of the habit, and with an admirable resistance to linguistic looseness, continue to call most people they know 'my acquaintance' -or, as they put it early on, 'mine acquaintance'. (p.148).*

In selecting authentic texts from one culture, whether a ticket, a menu, or a literary passage, our concern is that we impart a true impression of the context of the text. If this is done, then even the simplest piece of realia will be analysed as a cultural artifact and be integral to the developing cultural proficiency of the learner.

*. . . A German menu is indeed an authentic text . . . The cultural authenticity of menus derives from their being embedded in a host of social and symbolic relations in the C2-(target culture) price of food, taxes and tips, restaurant-going habits of customers, food and drug regulations, waiters' wages, trade unions, standard of living, the rituals and metaphors of dining out-that all have their counter-parts in the native culture'. (Nostrand 1989, p.49, quoting Claire Kramsch).*

Howard Nostrand agrees with the wisdom of this approach versus the anecdotal treatment that culture receives in some foreign language textbooks. And so we need to place the authentic text in a context for students and add information about that context. Only in this way can we hope to avoid the contrastive approach to culture many students naturally see as an end in itself.

Nostrand suggests that as we guide students in their contact with authentic materials we should aim to impart the 'central code' of the culture being studied. This includes customs and proprieties and above all the culture's 'ground of meaning: its system of major values, habitual patterns of thought, and certain prevalent assumptions about human nature and society which the foreigner should be prepared to encounter.' (Nostrand 1989, p.51)

We can help students see how what they are reading fits in with the framework of a culture that is logical and makes sense, even if it is different from our own. In this way, we can guide students to the desired goal of empathy for another culture, rather than a fairly common reaction of 'they're different and so they're weird'. And so even though we may use the skill of comparing and contrasting during this process, our attempt as instructors is to show the logic of the system of which this cultural piece is a part as well as its new characteristics.

***Acquiring the words of a new language, one at a time, does not lead automatically to the acquisition of the 'inner life' of that language.***

Students begin to establish a pattern of reading in another language as a curious outsider to the culture of those who speak that language, certainly an important element in thoughtful reading in the foreign language. Indeed, the realization that one lives in a culture, and that this is only one of many cultures in the world, is one of the important insights reading in the foreign language class can impart to a student.

The goal in all that we have examined is one of teaching all students (not just the bright and privileged) how to think rigorously, wisely and imaginatively, even in entry level foreign language classes – thereby making good thinking the substance of the most basic classroom activities.

In this kind of class students are empowered with effective thinking processes as they read in a foreign language. Here they feel success and learn to read with increased awareness of their importance as reader. To the extent that we can accomplish this in our class, we have created a special site for thought, and another reason for considering foreign language study basic to the secondary and post-secondary curriculum.

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# Estimating Sydney's Language Resource: Preliminary Findings of Four Years of College Selection Tests

by Stuart J Campbell

## Background to the data gathering process

In late 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988 candidates for professional language courses at Macarthur Institute of Higher Education (now University of Western Sydney, Macarthur) were invited to sit a bilingual selection test. The test was part of a wider selection procedure, and was designed to assess candidates' proficiency in English and at least one other language in as cost effective a manner as possible. The same battery of tests was used over the four years. The data for 1985-1988 forms what is called for convenience the Macarthur bilingual candidates database. The database, now comprising nearly 800 candidates and around 3,600 individual tests, will be augmented with the test results for subsequent years.

In 1985 the test was used for candidates for a Bachelor of Arts in Interpreting and Translation and an Associate Diploma in Community Languages (Interpreting and Translation Specialisation). In 1986, there were candidates for the Bachelor of Arts in Interpreting and Translation. In 1985 and 1986 each candidate was tested in English and one of Arabic, German, Italian, Spanish or Vietnamese. Candidates were invited to sit for the test by applying first through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Centre of New South Wales in response to courses. The publicity for the course stated that candidates should be 'bilingual' in English and one of the languages mentioned above.

In 1987 and 1988 the tests were used for the Bachelor of Arts in Interpreting and Translation as well as a Bachelor of Arts in Community Languages and a Bachelor of Arts/Diploma in Education (Community Languages). French was introduced into the test for the latter two courses, candidates for which were advised in the Universities and Colleges Admissions Centre (UCAC) publicity that they needed to be 'fluent' in English and one of Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese. Since the latter two courses involved study of two languages beside English, candidates were advised that they could be tested in a third language if they desired. While there were no restrictions on combinations of language for the BA Community Languages, for the BA/Dip Ed course, multiple-language candidates were advised to be tested in French or German and one of Arabic, Italian, Spanish or Vietnamese.

To summarise the language test combinations of the candidature:

1985 and 1986: English and one of Arabic, German, Italian, Spanish or Vietnamese.

1987 and 1988: Bachelor of Arts in Interpreting and Translation candidates: As 1985 and 1986.

Bachelor of Arts (Community Languages) candidates: English and one or two of Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Bachelor of Arts/Diploma in Education (Community Languages) candidates: English and one of Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese; or English with German or French and one of Arabic, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

In all years where more than one course was offered, many candidates applied for more than one course.

Given the various course requirements and language restrictions, the minimum effect of the test procedure was to have the English and one other language tested of candidates who professed to be 'fluent' or 'bilingual' in those two languages.

## Test procedure

The components of the test battery were:

- a 50-item modified C-test in English, comprising three passages, each with the first sentence unmutilated and the last half deleted from every alternate word in the remainder of the passage; where the complete word contained an odd number of letters, the unmutilated part contained half the letters plus one;
- a 50-item modified C-test on the model of the English test in each of Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese

- a 100-word tape recorded dictation passage in English
- a 100-word tape recorded dictation passaged in each of Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese
- a battery of tape recorded questions in English on candidates' education, background, personal aims, language use, etc.; a battery of similar questions in each of the other languages. The questions were answered orally and recorded. This part of the test is not discussed further here since the data was not retained and the scoring procedure was too impressionistic to be used as research data

## Results

Note that in the following sections reference is made to, for example, 'Italian candidates' and 'Vietnamese group'. In each case, the adjective indicates the language other than English in which candidates were tested, and not country of origin or ethnicity.

### TABLE 1

### Combinations of languages taken beside English

| **Year** | **1985** | **1986** | **1987** | **1988** | **1985-88** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Arabic only** | 39 | 30 | 32 | 44 | 145 |
| **French only** | - | - | 14 | 18 | 32 |
| **German only** | 15 | 14 | 12 | 19 | 60 |
| **Italian only** | 38 | 32 | 56 | 33 | 159 |
| **Spanish only** | 45 | 60 | 48 | 57 | 210 |
| **Vietnamese only** | 40 | 28 | 28 | 33 | 129 |
| **French + Arabic** | - | - | 8 | 8 | 16 |
| **French + German** | - | - | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| **French + Italian** | - | - | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| **French + Spanish** | - | - | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| **French + Vietnamese** | - | - | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| **Italian + Spanish** | - | - | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| **German + Italian** | - | - | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| **Total Candidates** | **177** | **164** | **216** | **220** | **777** |

### TABLE 2

### Mean scores (out of 50)

| **Year** | **1985** | **1986** | **1987** | **1988** | **1985-88** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Arabic C-Test** | 17.87 | 18.93 | 20.75 | 20.67 | 19.69 |
| **Arabic Dictation** | 46.53 | 46.48 | 47.97 | 49.41 | 47.81 |
| **French C-test** | - | - | 18.74 | 21.82 | 20.25 |
| **French Dictation** |  | - | -19.80 | 28.86 | 24.26 |
| **German C-test** | 26.53 | 28.86 | 30.46 | 18.90 | 25.42 |
| **German Dictation** | 31.83 | 37.75 | 40.46 | 34.35 | 35.79 |
| **Italian C-test** | 22.42 | 21.75 | 19.75 | 20.00 | 20.74 |
| **Italian Dictation** | 41.95 | 42.13 | 36.83 | 36.39 | 38.80 |
| **Spanish C-test** | 26.22 | 26.03 | 22.37 | 26.05 | 25.12 |
| **Spanish Dictation** | 32.60 | 33.58 | 29.85 | 31.87 | 32.01 |
| **Vietnamese C-Test** | 38.88 | 41.43 | 39.21 | 37.41 | 39.12 |
| **Vietnamese C-test** | 47.83 | 48.43 | 47.04 | 46.26 | 47.39 |
| **English C-test** | 23.29 | 27.02 | 26.76 | 24.55 | 25.40 |
| **English Dictation (all candidates)** | 41.43 | 42.64 | 44.97 | 42.94 | 43.10 |

### Table 2: Mean scores (out of 50) (cont.)

| Year | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1985-88 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **English C-test** | 16.64 | 19.13 | 17.48 | 18.81 | 18.01 |
| **English Dictation** | 39.82 | 42.80 | 40.54 | 42.84 | 41.53 |
| **(Arabic group)** | | | | | |
| **English C-test** | - | - | 28.56 | 27.58 | 28.07 |
| **English Dictation** | - | - | 47.29 | 47.44 | 47.37 |
| **(French Group)** | | | | | |
| **English C-test** | 33.47 | 39.50 | 36.77 | 34.25 | 35.77 |
| **English Dictation** | 44.97 | 49.57 | 49.27 | 49.10 | 48.24 |
| **(German Group)** | | | | | |
| **English C-test** | 31.24 | 30.53 | 30.42 | 31.86 | 30.92 |
| **English Dictation** | 47.70 | 47.48 | 48.67 | 47.85 | 48.07 |
| **(Italian Group)** | | | | | |
| **English C-test** | 25.07 | 28.29 | 28.59 | 25.23 | 26.89 |
| **English Dictation** | 42.03 | 40.65 | 45.34 | 43.84 | 43.01 |
| **(Spanish Group)** | | | | | |
| **English C-test** | 16.08 | 22.46 | 20.43 | 15.97 | 18.36 |
| **English Dictation** | 34.90 | 37.89 | 38.21 | 29.78 | 34.92 |
| **(Vietnamese Group)** | | | | | |

## TABLE 3

### Stronger language

'Stronger Language' is defined as the language in which the candidate's totalled standardised scores for C-test and dictation were higher.

| Language of Test | % stronger in English | % stronger in language of test |
|---|---|---|
| **Arabic** | 24.36 | 75.64 |
| **French** | 67.19 | 32.81 |
| **German** | 78.12 | 21.88 |
| **Italian** | 72.73 | 27.27 |
| **Spanish** | 52.75 | 47.25 |
| **Vietnamese** | 21.43 | 78.57 |

## TABLE 4

### Correlation of dictation and C-test in the seven languages

| C-test<br>Dictation | Ar. | Eng. | Fr. | Ge. | It. | Sp. | Vi |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Arabic** | +.58 | | | | | | |
| **English** | | +.64 | | | | | |
| **French** | | | +.80 | | | | |
| **German** | | | | +.66 | | | |
| **Italian** | | | | | +.70 | | |
| **Spanish** | | | | | | +.71 | |
| **Vietnamese** | | | | | | | +.69 |

p = . . . .001 in all cases.

## TABLE 5

### Correlation of English dictation and English C-test according to other language taken

**English C-test by other language taken**

| **English Dictation** | **Ar.** | **Fr.** | **Ge.** | **It.** | **Sp** | **Vi.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Arabic** | +.65 | | | | | |
| **French** | | +.63 | | | | |
| **German** | | | +.30 | | | |
| **Italian** | | | | +.55 | | |
| **Spanish** | | | | | +.58 | |
| **Vietnamese** | | | | | | +.61 |

p = . . . .001 in all cases except 'German', where p = . . . .02

## TABLE 6

### Correlation of English Dictation and C-test with other language dictation and C-test

| | **English Dictation** | **English C-test** |
|---|---|---|
| **Arabic Dictation** | -.09 | -.12 |
| **French Dictation** | +.10 | +.04 |
| **German Dictation** | +.34 (p= . . . .01) | +.22 (p= . . . .10) |
| **Italian Dictation** | -.04 | +.19 (p= . . . .05) |
| **Spanish Dictation** | -.06 | -.02 |
| **Vietnamese Dictation** | +.28 (p= . . . .01) | +.27 (p= . . . .01) |
| **Arabic C-test** | +.04 | +.07 |
| **French C-test** | +.11 | +.08 |
| **German C-test** | +.15 | +.30 (p= . . . .02) |
| **Italian C-test** | -.08 | +.20 (p= . . . .05) |
| **Spanish C-test** | -.08 | +.06 |

## Discussion

### Number of candidates

Fishman (1984) has discussed the extent to which languages can be considered a resource, while the notion of Australian migrant languages being a resource underlies much of the current rhetoric about the exploitation of these skills, especially to meet economic goals. (See Lo Bianco, 1987 for numerous references to languages as a resource). To my knowledge there has been no published discussion of the real size and accessibility of this resource. Linked with demographic data, the database can be used to estimate the extent to which languages spoken in the community are available as a resource.

Statistical data on languages spoken in Australia is still patchy and indirect. For example, the Australian Bureau of Statistics Languages Survey, Australia, May 1983 (preliminary) gives figures for major languages for the whole of Australia but does not give a breakdown for statistical divisions and subdivisions. An indirect source is the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales Local government areas ethnic population survey as at 1981 census, which although it gives place of birth rather than 'language analyses' by statistical division and subdivision. Establishing the number of speakers in a particular city is, then, extremely difficult.

If the numbers of speakers of languages other than English (LOTE) Australia-wide given in the Language Survey are in approximate proportion to the numbers in South West Sydney, then the availability of the resource varies enormously from language to language. For example, as percentages of the total of speakers of Italian, German, Spanish, Arabic/Lebanese and Vietnamese Australia-wide, Italian ranks highest, followed by German, Arabic/Lebanese, Spanish and Vietnamese. This ranking is rather different from the total Macarthur candidature over four years:

| **Speakers (based on ABS)** | | **Macarthur candidates:** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Italian | (58%) | Spanish | (30%) |
| German | (22%) | Italian | (23%) |
| Arabic/Lebanese | (10%) | Arabic | (21%) |
| Spanish | (7%) | Vietnamese | (17%) |
| Vietnamese | (3%) | German | (8%) |

Clearly, questions need to be asked about the low ranking of German and the high ranking of Spanish in our candidature; the explanations may included uneven distributions of speakers of certain languages from city to city, and disproportionate increases in the numbers of some language speakers since the survey was carried out. But they may also have to do with the availability of the resource for each language. It appears, for example, that while Spanish has relatively few speakers, a relatively large proportion of them consider their language to be a usable resource. German, on the other hand, has relatively many speakers but relatively few who consider German as a usable resource.

***Statistical data on languages spoken in Australia is still patchy and indirect. Establishing the number of speakers in a particular city is, then, extremely difficult.***

Birthplace statistics for Sydney derived from the Local Government Areas Ethnic Population Survey As At 1981 Census rank Italy as the most common non-English speaking country of birth for residents of the Sydney statistical division, followed by Lebanon and Egypt, Germany and Austria, and Vietnam (Lebanon/Egypt and Germany/Austria are combined here for comparability with language). However, in the 15-24 age bracket (probably closer to the age profile of candidates) the ranking is Lebanon, Italy and Vietnam, with Germany, Austria and Egypt not ranking at all. This correlates much more convincingly with the Macarthur candidature, although the survey does not capture figures of Australian-born of overseas-born parents who are likely to make up a considerable proportion of parts of our candidature.

Focusing on the South West Sydney Statistical Subdivision, where Macarthur is located, the ranking of country of birth for all age groups is Italy, Germany, Vietnam, but for the 15-24 age bracket it is Italy, Vietnam, Germany, Lebanon. Again, the focused age bracket correlates more convincingly with the candidature.

The rather small number of candidates (194 each year on average) is perhaps worrying. For example, taking the Arabic-speaking population of Sydney as between 50,000 and 100,000 (the 1983 Language Survey gives the number of Arabic speakers in Australia as 77,565), in any one year only 40 individuals, or between .04% and .08% are candidates. The analogy with 'real' resources is instructive: even though oil used to be drilled only on dry land there were still vast amounts under the ocean floor. There may well be a large untapped language resource in a city like Sydney; however, many factors prevent that resource from being accessible for professional training. Some of these may be: appropriate age, level of education, need for a career or the lack thereof, financial capacity to study, the attractiveness or otherwise of courses, the attractiveness or otherwise of careers in languages, and the geographical location of educational institutions.

### Year by year variation

Over the four years of the study, variation in candidature from year to year appears not to be large, except in one or two cases. Vietnamese-speaking candidates were high in 1985 and levelled off in subsequent years, while there was a surge of Italian-speaking candidates in 1987. Arabic-speaking candidates increased in 1988. The study has not up to 1988 collected data that would explain these fluctuations, and it would be pointless over a mere four years to try to match the variations against, for example, census data. Despite the fluctuations, the patterns revealed are steady enough for course administrators to plan staff and resources.

As numbers of candidates have not varied greatly from year to year, either has quality except in the German group, whose candidature is both small (about 15 each year) and varied in its composition. From our informal observations and an inspection of candidates' names, the German speaking group consists of a) Anglo-Australians who have studied German at school, b) second generation German-Australians, c) first generation German-Australians, d) other nationalities such as Hungarians and Iranians who have acquired German as a second or third language. Under these conditions mean scores from year to year can be easily influenced by a few very good or very poor candidates.

### Professed trilingualism

In 1987 and 1988, candidates for the Community Languages degrees were given the opportunity of sitting a test in two languages other than English. Course organisers predicted a large number of Arabic+French candidates because of the prevalence of French in some sectors of the Lebanese education system, and expected some Vietnamese-French candidates among older Vietnamese applicants. The Arabic prediction was certainly borne out, with most applicants for the relevant degrees professing trilingualism. There has not, however, been a flood of elderly French/Vietnamese/English trilinguals. Among the other languages, 1987 showed an initially encouraging number of professed trilinguals, which was not repeated in 1988. It is likely that most of the non-Arabic candidates professing French had studied French at Australian high schools.

### Variation across language

The tests for each language are, of course, independent; strictly one cannot make comparisons between a C-test in French and a C-test in Italian. However, the dictation test is perhaps possible to compare: since all the dictation passages were taken from general sources it can be assumed that an educated native speaker would get a perfect score whatever the language; there is at least an upper benchmark. On this basis, the languages rank as follows: Arabic candidates did best in their dictation followed by Vietnamese, Italian, German, Spanish, French. Average scores of 47/50 for Arabic and 32/50 for Spanish give an idea of the range: 47/50 indicates that there were 6 words in a 100 word passage with at least one error; 32/50 indicates 36 words with errors. The French average score is even lower than Spanish, but it should be recalled that for many French candidates this was a third language.

### Variation in English from one language group to another

Quite large variation in English scores across the language groups was observed, with the greater range in the C-test. Arabic speaking candidates were the poorest at the English C-test, followed by Vietnamese, Spanish, French, Italian, and German. The order for the English dictation was slightly different with the Vietnamese speaking candidates the poorest, followed by Arabic, Spanish, French, German, and Italian. The change in position of Arabic and Vietnamese is doubtless due to Vietnamese speakers' characteristic phonological problems in decoding spoken English. The sequence is virtually the inverse of the Percentage Stronger in English order. The three rankings are set out below for comparison:

| Best English C-test | Best English Dictation | Highest % stronger in English |
|---|---|---|
| German | Italian | German |
| Italian | German | Italian |
| French | French | French |
| Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Vietnamese | Arabic | Arabic |
| Arabic | Vietnamese | Vietnamese |

### Brief observations on the test battery

An analysis of the test battery is not within the scope of this paper. However, some brief observations can be made. For all languages, C-test scores and dictation scores correlate highly. Nevertheless, there is some interesting variation among the languages. At one end of the extreme, Arabic C-tests correlated with Arabic dictations with a coefficient of .58; at the other came French at .80. The choice of C-test and dictation was made so that a spread of language competence could be measured in at least two senses. It was thought that the two tests would measure different aspects of language competence in the same individual; and it was hoped that the dictation would discriminate well among weaker candidates, and the C-test better among stronger candidates. While the Arabic tests appear to be measuring different things to an extent, the French tests are perilously close and may need overhauling. A suspicion is that the dictation passage is recorded too fast and contains more proper names than the other passages.

***There may well be a large untapped language resource in a city like Sydney; however, many factors prevent that resource from being accessible for professional training.***

Perhaps more revealing is the variation in correlations for English tests by language groups. For all groups except German speakers, the English C-tests and dictations correlated highly. For German speakers, barely more than a trend was observed. The strength of the correlations ranks fairly closely to the ranks we saw earlier for the English tests, so that the Italian and German groups have a lower correlation and generally better English, and the Arabic and Vietnamese groups have a high correlation and generally poorer English. This is almost certainly due to the plateauing of dictation scores in the stronger groups so that many candidates are achieving near perfect scores; the poorer groups have a better spread of dictation scores to correlate with a spread of C-test scores.

Somewhat of a puzzle is a group of correlations that appear not to be feasible at first sight. Correlations were calculated between the English tests and the tests in the other languages. In the case of the Arabic, French and Spanish groups, the lack of significant correlations between English and LOTE tests showed that the competences tested were quite separate; in other words, one could be sure that candidates are good or bad at French or English, rather than good or bad at tests in general.

The correlations found among the German, Italian and Vietnamese groups are dealt with one by one.

- There is a high correlation between the English and German dictations. This may be partially explained by the high number of candidates for whom neither English nor German is a first language; for these candidates dictation may be a measure of the ability to acquire a second language – bad learners learn both languages badly, good learners learn both languages well. It might also reflect some 'semilingualism' among second generation German candidates. The same factors might underlie a weak correlation between the German dictation and the English C-test and between the German and English C-tests.

The English C-test correlates significantly both with the Italian dictation and the Italian C-test. The Italian candidature is predominantly second generation straight from high school, or first generation Italians who have finished school in Australia. These correlations may reflect a benefit of language maintenance: where Italian is well maintained, English benefits too. The lack of a correlation with the English dictation is probably due to the Italian group ranking highest in English dictation: a plateau of near perfect scores precludes a correlation with a spread of scores.

Finally, the Vietnamese candidates reveal high correlations among all four possible combinations of English and Vietnamese tests. This puzzling phenomenon seems at first sight to reflect an extreme example of 'test-wiseness': if the candidate is good at doing tests in English, then they are good at tests in Vietnamese. But a comparison with the Italian group suggests that the language maintenance phenomenon is operating. Recall that the English dictation of Italian candidates did not correlate with the Italian tests probably because of the plateau effect in the English dictations. The Vietnamese candidates' English dictations plateaued much less (mean=34.92/50 compared to 48.07 for Italian candidates) and therefore permits a better correlation coefficient. But we are considering a different kind of language maintenance here – possibly linked with a general education factor for Vietnamese candidates – since unlike many Italian candidates they are generally first generation migrants for whom English is not the stronger language. Without the benefit of other information our tentative hypothesis is that Vietnamese candidates who acquire English well also maintain their Vietnamese.

## Conclusion

The Macarthur bilingual candidates database comprises C-tests and dictations in English in at least one of Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese of nearly 800 candidates for degree-level professional language courses over four years of tests. Given additional demographic and sociolinguistic data, the database can be used to establish the availability of the language resource in South West Sydney. Comparison with limited demographic data suggests that a very small proportion – perhaps in the order of a twentieth of one per cent – of second language speakers make their language available as a resource for professional training. There also appear to be differences from language to language in the readiness of speakers to see their language as a resource. The database also suggests different degrees of language maintenance from language to language. From 1990 onwards, the test battery is to be supplemented with a questionnaire on language use and education, gender, age and postcode.

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